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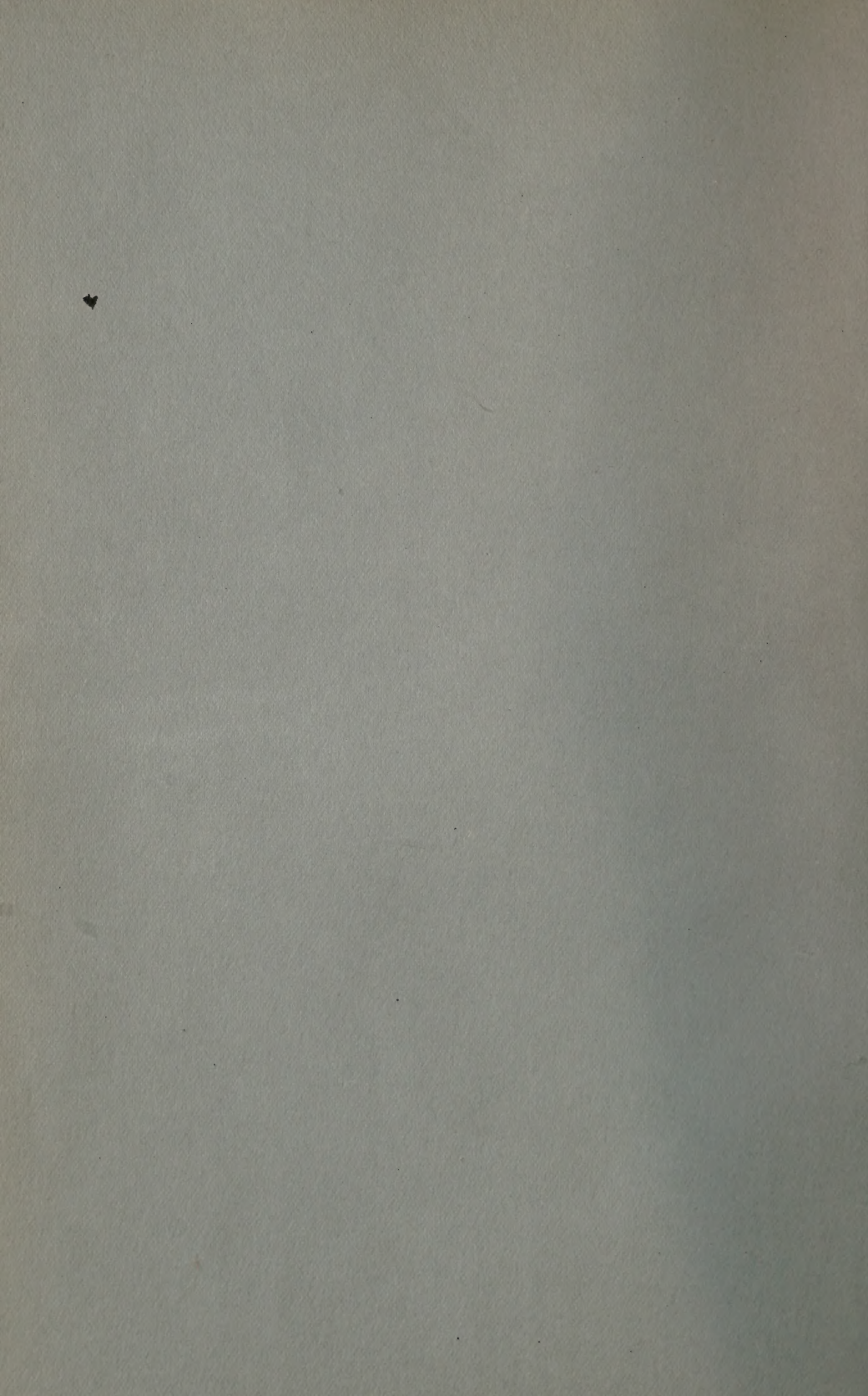
THE NEGRO MIGRATION OF 1916-1918

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BY
HENDERSON H. DONALD, A.B., A.M.

[Reprinted from THE JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY, Vol. VI, No. 4, October, 1921.]

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1921.



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PREFACE.

This dissertation has been considerably revised and augmented in the light of statistical information published by the United States Bureau of the Census since this work was presented to the Faculty of the Yale Graduate School in candidacy for the degree of Master of Arts. Some of this new information has just been published. On December 17, 1921, the Department of Commerce, through the Bureau of the Census, issued a special statement pertaining to Negro migration in the United States, as shown by the returns of the Fourteenth Decennial Census, taken as of January 1, 1920.

“ The total number of Negroes born in and living in the United States proper, as enumerated for January 1, 1920, was 10,381,309 which total includes 38,575 Negroes for whom the state of birth was not ascertained by the enumerators. The total number for whom the state of birth was reported, 10,342,734, comprised 8,288,492, or 80.1 per cent, who were living in the States in which they were born, and 2,054,242, or 19.9 per cent, who were living in other States. In 1910 the percentage living in other States was 16.6, and in 1900 it was 15.6.

“ The total number of Negroes reported as born in the South (that part of the country lying south of the southern boundaries of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas) was 9,600,943. Of these, 7,751,361, or 80.7 per cent, were living in their native States in 1920; 1,068,788, or 11.1 per cent, were living in other Southern States; and 780,794, or 8.1 per cent, were living in the North or West. The total number of Negroes reported as born in the North or West was 741,791, of whom 537,131, or 72.4 per cent, were living in their native States in 1920; 157,437, or 21.2 per cent, were living in other northern or western States; and 47,223, or 6.4 per cent, were living in

the South. Thus the proportion of southern-born Negroes who migrated to the North or West, 8.1 per cent, was only about one-fourth larger than the proportion of the Negroes who were born in the North or West and migrated to the South, 6.4 per cent.

“ The number of Negroes born in the South and living in the North or West less the number born in the North or West and living in the South was 733,571. These may be termed the survivors of the net migration of Negroes from the South to the North and West. The number of southern-born Negroes living in the North and West increased from 440,534 in 1910 to 780,794 in 1920, forming 40.9 per cent of the total Negro population of the North and West in the earlier and 50.3 per cent in the later.

“ The migration of southern Negroes to northern and western States undoubtedly took place to a materially greater extent between 1910 and 1920 than during the preceding decade. While it is impossible to calculate exactly the extent of this migration during the recent decade, the available data indicate that approximately 400,000, or somewhat more than one-half, of the 733,571 survivors of the net Negro migration from the South to the North and West prior to January 1, 1920, left the South subsequently to April 15, 1910.

“ In general, the Negroes born in the North and West and in the northern part of the South have migrated to a much greater extent than those born in the far South. Considering as one group all the Negroes born in the northern and western States, the percentage living, in 1920, in other States than those in which born was 27.6; considering as another group those born in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Oklahoma—*i.e.*, the northern part of the South—the corresponding percentage was 24.8; but for the Negroes born in the far southern States of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi,

Louisiana, and Texas, the percentage living in States other than those in which born was only 16.2.

“ Although migration to the North and West has not taken place among the far southern Negroes to the same extent, relatively to their total numbers, as among the Negroes in the northern part of the South, there was nevertheless a pronounced increase in such migration from the far South during the past decade. For example: The Negroes who were born in South Carolina and had migrated from that State to Pennsylvania increased from 2,113 in 1910 to 11,624 in 1920; those from Georgia to Pennsylvania increased from 1,578 to 16,196; those from Florida to Pennsylvania, from 393 to 5,370; those from Alabama to Ohio, from 781 to 17,588; those from Mississippi to Illinois, from 4,612 to 19,485; those from Louisiana to Illinois, from 1,609 to 8,078; and those from Texas to Missouri, from 1,907 to 4,344.”

These additional facts, however, do not upset the conclusions already set forth in the last chapter. They rather confirm them. It is hardly likely, therefore, that the collection and publication of more detailed statistics will throw sufficient new light on this situation to warrant a different point of view with regard to the Negro Migration of 1916-1918.

HENDERSON H. DONALD.

NEW YORK CITY

December, 1921.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. Introduction	1
II. Previous Negro Movements	11
III. Source, Volume, Composition, and Destination ..	19
IV. Causes of the Recent Migration	28
V. The Effects of the Migration on the South	39
VI. The Effects of the Migration on the North	52
VII. The Effects of the Migration on the Migrants ...	63
VIII. Dependents and Delinquents	76
IX. The Statistics of 1920	89
X. Some Conclusions	103

THE NEGRO MIGRATION OF 1916-1918

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with its title, this essay is intended to be an interpretation of the recent Negro migration in the United States. Its object is to sift out from the mass of

¹ This dissertation was presented by Henderson H. Donald to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Yale University in candidacy for the degree of Master of Arts, May, 1920. Since then it has been considerably revised and augmented.

In the preparation of this work the following books were used: James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Volume II; F. S. Chapin, *Introduction to the Study of Human Evolution*; H. P. Fairchild, *Immigration*; H. E. Gregory, A. G. Keller, and A. L. Bishop, *Physical and Commercial Geography*; A. G. Keller, *Societal Evolution*; R. F. Hoxie, *Trade Unionism in the United States*; E. J. Scott, *Negro Migration during the War*; W. G. Sumner, *Folkways*; F. J. Warne, *The Immigration Invasion*; C. G. Woodson, *A Century of Negro Migration*.

The following magazine articles were also helpful: Ray S. Baker, "The Negro Goes Forth" (*World's Work*, 34: 314-17, July, 1917); W. E. B. DuBois, "The Migration of Negroes" (*The Crisis*, 14: 63-66, June, 1917); B. M. Edens, "When Labor is Cheap" (*Survey*, 38: 511, September 8, 1917); H. A. Hoyer, "Migration of Colored Workers" (*Survey*, 45: 930, March 26, 1921); G. E. Haynes, "Negroes Move North" (*Survey*, 40: 115-22, May 4, 1917) and "Effect of War Conditions on Negro Labor" (*Academy of Political Science*, 8: 299-312, February, 1919); T. A. Hill, "Why Southern Negroes Don't go South" (*Survey*, 43: 183-85, November 29, 1919); H. W. Horwill, "A Negro Exodus" (*Contemporary Review*, 114: 299-305, September, 1918; *Literary Digest*, 54: 1914, January 23, 1917); "The South Calling Negroes

writings the most salient facts pertaining to this movement and to present them in such a manner as to give a correct impression of it in its entirety. In this regard, however, it is not a mere narration of events, but, as far as possible, a sort of scientific analysis of the facts therein contained. Thus, it aims to treat in a systematic and logical manner the various aspects of the movement, to show the relationship between them, and to try to understand and account for the economic and social forces involved. In pursuance of this it has, therefore, seemed fitting to include in this study a brief survey of migration in general, the origin, nature, and scope of the recent movement, its relation to previous movements, its causes and effects, and some conclusions regarding its meaning and significance.

In the preparation of this essay, moreover, the writer
Back; An Exodus in America '' (*Living Age*, 295: 57-60, October 6, 1917);
 '' The Negro Migration '' (*New Republic*, 7: 213-14, January 1, 1916; *New York Times*, November 12, 1916, 11, 12: 1; September 4, 1917, 3: 6; October 7, 1917, 111, 10: 1; January 21, 1919, 3: 6; June 14, 1919, 3: 6; June 18, 1919, 12: 5; June 11, 1920, 18: 1; December 12, 1921, 14: 1); H. B. Pendleton, '' Cotton Pickers in Northern Cities '' (*Survey*, 37: 569-71, February 17, 1917); W. O. Scroggs, '' Interstate Migration of Negroes '' (*Journal of Political Economy*, 25: 1034-43, December, 1917); '' The Lure of the North for Negroes '' (*Survey*, 38: 27-28, April 7, 1917); '' Reasons why Negroes go North '' (*Survey*, 38: 226-7, June 2, 1917); '' Negro Migration as the South sees It '' (*Survey*, 38: 428, August 11, 1917); '' Health of the Negro '' (*Survey*, 42: 596-7, June 19, 1919); '' Negroes in Industry '' (*Survey*, 42: 900, September 27, 1919); '' A New Migration '' (*Survey*, 45: 752, February 26, 1921); F. B. Washington, '' The Detroit New Comers' Greeting '' (*Survey*, 38: 333-5, July 14, 1917); W. F. White, '' The Success of Negro Migration '' (*The Crisis*, 19: 112-15, January, 1920); T. J. Woofert, Jr., '' The Negro and Industrial Peace '' (*Survey*, 45: 420-421, December 17, 1921); J. A. Wright, '' Conditions among Negro Migrants in Hartford, Connecticut '' (a letter).

The following pamphlets and reports were also valuable: Branson and others, *Migration, Minutes of University Commission on Southern Race Questions*, pp. 48-49, 1917; Bureau of the United States Census, *Negro Population in the United States, 1790-1916*, and *Negroes in the United States*, Bulletin 129: A. Epstein, *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburg*; G. E. Haynes, *Negro New-comers in Detroit, Michigan*; Home Mission Council, *The Negro Migration*; E. K. Jones, *The Negro in Industry, Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, pp. 494-503, June, 1917; United States Department of Labor, *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, and *The Negro at Work during the War and Reconstruction*.

has drawn very freely from the material contained in a report of the United States Department of Labor. Accurately described, this source is rather a compilation of reports based on investigations of this movement during the summer of 1917. These inquiries were authorized by the Secretary of Labor and were supervised by Dr. James H. Dillard, formerly a professor and a dean of the faculty at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, and, at present, Director of the Jeanes and Slater Funds for Negro education in the South. The actual investigations were made and reported on by the following: Mr. T. J. Woofter, Mr. R. H. Leavell, Mr. T. R. Snavely, Mr. W. T. B. Williams and Professor F. D. Tyson of the University of Pittsburgh.

This essay, however, views this movement as the Negro Migration of 1916-18 instead of the "Negro Migration of 1916-17," as some have termed it. This position is taken on the following grounds: The Negroes were attracted to the North largely through the great demand for labor which had been made a fact by the departure of thousands of aliens to serve their respective countries in the Great War. The Negro migration stream began flowing in the spring of 1916, reached its highest mark in 1917, and, even though much diminished, coursed on through 1918 up to the signing of the armistice. With the occurrence of this event the need for Negro labor became considerably less acute, thus causing a decided dwindling of the movement, but not a sudden stoppage of it. It drifted on, however, but with an ever-decreasing volume. Even during the latter part of the summer of 1919 signs that this movement was still in progress were evident, as Negroes were found moving North, though in very small numbers.

A study of the movement of any group of mankind almost of necessity reverts to the consideration of the relation of man to his environment, both natural and human. In the first place, it is known that man, like the plant or the animal, is greatly influenced by his natural surround-

² A full list of these occurs in the bibliographical section of this essay.

ings. It is the policy of nature to allow an unlimited number of individuals to be born, while at the same time the amount of food and space upon the earth is limited. This results in a perpetual struggle for survival, or existence. In this struggle, through the process of natural selection, the individuals possessing those qualities suitable for life in their environment are allowed to survive and to transmit these favorable qualities to their offspring, whereas those having the less fit traits are weeded out. In a word, the battle is to the strong, the race is to the swift.³ The chances of survival of all organisms, therefore, depend on adaptation or adjustment to external conditions.⁴

Besides adaptation, however, nature also presents to the plant or animal other alternatives whenever any fundamental change occurs in the environment which affects the life of these individuals. These alternatives are death, degeneration, and flight. These have all had their effects upon man as well as upon plants and animals. "It is well known that men die when natural conditions become favorable enough; famines recurrently sweep many from the earth. Again, they degenerate when they are forced to live a life that it is possible to live but only in a miserable way. Some of the lowest tribes of men, like the South African Bushmen, or the Digger Indians, have been forced by stronger tribes to withdraw into the desert and to exist upon a lower plane of life. The physique of such peoples betrays the hardships which they have suffered. Men also flee from an unfavorable environment, thus escaping death or degeneracy, if the way into a more favorable locality lies open to them. Much of migration and colonization comes under this alternative."⁵ This topic is well illustrated by those farms of New England which have been

³ Chapin, F. S., *Introduction to the Study of Human Evolution*, pp. 30-31.

⁴ This law, of course, does not fully operate among men in a highly civilized state of living, for in this state its force is much diminished by various uplift, or counter-selective, agencies.

⁵ Gregory, Keller, and Bishop, *Physical and Commercial Geography*, pt. II, p. 126.

abandoned by their former owners, and have been occupied by immigrants from Europe.⁶

As man is compelled to adapt himself to his natural surroundings in order to survive, so he must do in regard to his human or social environment. This external situation is due to the fact that man lives his life in a group, or a society, composed of numerous individuals like himself. In this society are laws or conventions which are imposed on all by the group, and which all are required to obey.⁷ Often, however, it happens that in various ways the acts of large numbers of the group come into conflict with these laws, and the result is the maladjustment of those who have behaved thus. Society then takes steps to compel these individuals to bring themselves back into harmony with the life of the rest of the group. During this period of compulsion, however, all do not comply with the commands of society, for many avail themselves of the alternative of flight or migration to another place where conditions of life seem more favorable. The numerous historical accounts of men and women leaving their native lands in order to escape discomforts, dissatisfactions, punishment or persecution for various reasons, are examples of this state of affairs.

Migration then is an important element in man's environmental relations. It is the means by which he is enabled to escape the pain of an unfavorable environment and to find the pleasure which might result from adaptation in more favorable surroundings. Through flight or migration man simply adopts the course on which his efforts meet with the least resistance, because, instead of remaining in the unfavorable locality to struggle against the most adverse circumstances, or to run the risk of suffering death or degeneracy, he moves elsewhere, where the obstacles appear to be fewer, and where adaptation seems a matter of easier accomplishment. Now, should this same principle be applied to this specific subject under discussion, it would,

⁶ Gregory, Keller, and Bishop, *Physical and Commercial Geography*, pt. II, p. 126.

⁷ Keller, A. G., *Societal Evolution*, pp. 24-37.

perhaps, be demonstrated that the Negroes, likewise, simply used migration as a means of escaping the intolerable conditions in their home environment and of making their way into another accessible locality, where the chances of winning out in the struggle for existence seemed more certain.

In this view of migration as a means of escape from unfavorable environmental conditions we must distinguish it, however, from those earliest movements of primitive men. These were, perhaps, instinctive and differed little from the movements of animals. They were mere "wanderings"; but they were the necessary forerunners of the more recent movements.⁸ Migration, in its truest sense, is a reasoned movement which arose after man had progressed far enough in the scale of civilization to have a fixed abiding place. It is a definite movement from one place to another. It involves an actual and permanent change of residence. Migration, therefore, occurred only in the most rudimentary form among people in the hunting stage; more developed forms of it occurred among pastoral peoples, when they, for instance, changed their base of operation; but in its most complete form migration occurred only after man had reached the stage of agriculture.

If migration is a reasoned affair, it then follows that for every migration there must be some definable cause. This cause must be a very powerful one, because man is inclined to become attached to the locality in which he finds himself placed. There are formed ties of various kinds which tend to hold him to his home. These are the ties of family, friendly associations, customs and habits of the community, politics, religion, business, property, and superstitious reverence for graves. His life is, therefore, closely bound up with his surroundings, and the changing of it for that of another locality is a matter of serious

⁸ What is said here, and also in the remaining pages of this chapter, are for the most part reproductions of parts of Chapter I of *Immigration*, by H. P. Fairchild. In some cases quotations and paraphrases from this source are also given. The acknowledgment here, however, is once and for all.

concern. Thus, "there is a marked inertia, a resistance to pressure among human beings, and the presumption is that people will stay where they are unless some positive force causes them to move."

Furthermore, the force which operates in causing men to move generally presents one of two aspects, viz., attractive and repellent. "Men are either drawn or driven to break the ties which bind them to their native locality." Again, the causes of migration are classified as positive advantages and satisfactions, and negative discomforts and compulsions. The causes of the repellent or negative type exist in the environment of the locality to which man is already attached. They, therefore, are much more important than the others, because, despite the inducements of another locality which may be opened to him, it is the tendency of man to remain where he is, if he is contented. These forces must produce dissatisfaction with existing conditions in order to induce man to move. The causes of the attractive or positive type, on the other hand, are in a foreign environment, and operate often by stimulating dissatisfactions through comparison. They must, before movement can be induced, show that conditions in the new locality are superior to those in the home environment. "Thus, in almost every case of migration one is justified in looking for some cause of a repellent nature, some dissatisfaction, disability, discontent, hardship, or other disturbing condition;" and, likewise, some positive advantage, satisfaction, prospect of contentment, or other favorable condition. Therefore, it goes almost without saying that the study of this subject of Negro migration will show that these two types of forces or causes were also present in this recent movement.

Again, these repellent or negative conditions which cause men to move may arise in any of the various interests of human life, and may be classified as economic, political, social, and religious. Of these "the economic causes of migration are the earliest and by far the most important.

They arise in connection with man's effort to make his living and concern all interests which are connected with his productive efforts. They are disabilities or handicaps which affect his pursuit of food, clothing and shelter, as well as the less necessary comforts of life. These are vital interests and any dissatisfaction connected with them is of great weight to men."

Inasmuch as the economic causes of migration are primal and most important, and since like causes played such a large part in giving rise to this recent movement, it might be well to pause here to enumerate some of these causes, and to note briefly the nature of the same. In the first place, a migration may occur because of permanent infertility of the soil, harsh climate, or a dearth of natural resources which may perpetually intensify man's struggle for existence. In the next place, it may be due to temporary natural calamities such as drought, famine, flood, extreme seasons and so on. This latter set of causes, as will be seen later on, were prominent factors in the recent Negro movement from the South to the North. Again, people may be forced to move because of serious underdevelopment of the industrial arts which may make living hard by limiting the productive power of the people or by retarding them in the struggle for trade. Finally, migration may be due to overpopulation—a condition in which the population of a country has increased to such a degree that there are too many people in proportion to the supporting power of the environment.

As has just been intimated, the causes of migration are fourfold, namely, economic, political, social, and religious. Because of this it must not be thought, however, that these causes are separate and distinct; but it should be understood that they overlap each other and exist almost always in conjunction. In any migration two or more of them will be found present. For example, it is very difficult to find cases in which social causes alone account for a migration. They often, nevertheless, act as a contributory

factor to a movement. The economic causes are by far the most important and universal; but behind them are frequently other causes. "Political maladjustments often express themselves through economic or social disabilities, religious differences through economic and social limitations, etc." In short, it may be said that the motives of migration may be due to a complication of causes. This may be well illustrated by the study of the recent Negro migration in which it will be found that this movement was occasioned by a number of interacting economic, social, and, to a small extent, political forces.

As there are types of forces or causes giving rise to migration, there are likewise types of migration. These are the following four: invasion, conquest, colonization and immigration. Besides these four main types of movement there are other less important forms which deserve notice. They are of two kinds, namely, forced forms of migration, and internal or intra-state migration of peoples. The former occurs (1) when people are expelled from a country because of non-conformity to the established religion; (2) when they are compelled by actual force to leave one place and go to another, as in the case of the importation of Negroes from Africa to the United States to become slaves; and (3) when people are subjected to banishment from a country as a form of punishment for crime. The internal or intra-state movement is that which is going on all the time in most civilized countries, and which is usually a phenomenon of non-importance; but when it involves large masses of people, moving in certain well-defined directions, with a community of motives and purposes, it becomes of great interest and significance and deserves to be classed with the other great movements of peoples. One good example of this is the westward movement of the people of the United States during the early decades of the past century. Another which might be rightly classed as such is the recent large Negro migration which is under consideration in this essay.

The subject of migration in general is capable of very lengthy treatment, but as this is not our purpose here we shall terminate this discussion at this juncture. In this preliminary survey the aim has been to try to show, though in an exceedingly brief manner, the meaning and significance of migration as a factor in the human struggle for existence; the distinction between migration and the earliest movements of primitive man; the types of forces which figure in any migration; and the various forms in which a migration may occur. This has been done with the further intention of endeavoring to imbue the mind at the outset with the idea that this Negro migration is not very radically different from the past movements of civilized man, and that, like them, it occurred in obedience to certain laws which were operating in the environment of the migrants. If this object can be accomplished, little doubt is entertained that it will do much toward affording a clearer and more comprehensive view of the movement than could be otherwise obtained.

CHAPTER II

PREVIOUS NEGRO MOVEMENTS

Among the many who have written concerning this exodus one finds that not a few of them have been prone to emphasize the fact that in this recent movement the Negroes suddenly developed within themselves a desire to move, thus implying that migration is not controlled by certain economic and social laws, and that this movement was an entirely new social phenomenon. Disregarding for the present the first assumption, and directing attention to the second, the writer holds that the latter must have sprung from the fact that no account was taken of the past economic and social history of the Negroes; for a study in that direction would have shown that ever since the time of their emancipation the Negroes have shown a tendency to migrate.⁹ That this has been the case a number of instances will demonstrate.

Shortly after emancipation there occurred slow and confused movements of the Negro population which covered a period of several years. During his enslavement the Negro could hardly do anything without the will and consent of his master; he had not the liberty to order and direct his life as he chose. When, therefore, he was suddenly transformed from this state to that of freedom, the first thing he did was to put this freedom to test by moving about. Consequently he drifted from place to place and at the same time changed his name, employment, and even his wife. Many also devoted much of their time to hunting while they were awaiting Federal Government assistance in the form of land and mules. Emancipation meant to them not only freedom from slavery but freedom from responsibility as well. Thus during their early years of

⁹ Scroggs, W. O., *Jour. Pol. Econ.*, 25: 1034, Dec., 1917.

liberty large numbers of Negroes moved about almost aimlessly and thoughtlessly and made their way especially to the towns, cities and Federal military camps.¹⁰

There was, moreover, a considerable movement of the Negro population toward the southwestern part of the United States. It was very slow and was in operation between 1865 and 1875, when the expansion of the numerous railway systems gave rise to a great number of land speculators who did much to induce men to go West and settle on the land. Their appeals greatly aroused the Negroes who had reasons for a change of abode. This movement was at first composed of individuals; but later on it became a group movement. In this migratory stream which flowed southwestward were 35,000 Negroes, who came largely from South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi.¹¹

Again, in 1879, a large number of Negroes made a rush to Kansas.¹² This movement was due for the most part to agricultural depression in parts of the South, but was precipitated greatly by the activities of a host of petty Negro leaders who had sprung up in all parts of the South during the Reconstruction period. This exodus began early in March and continued till May. The estimated number of migrants was between 5,000 and 10,000; but there were thousands of others who had planned to migrate, but were deterred from doing so because of the news of the misfortunes which befell those who actually moved. The majority of those who left the South were from Louisiana and Mississippi. In this migration the Negroes left their homes when the weather was growing warm, but on reaching their destination found that spring had not yet arrived, the country being still bleak and desolate. Most of them were poorly clad and without funds. Consequently, many suffered from want and disease and consequently became public charges. As soon as it was convenient for them, however, large numbers returned to their homes where they

¹⁰ Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, pp. 117-20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-21.

¹² Scroggs, W. O., *Jour. Pol. Econ.*, 25: 1035-37, Dec., 1917.

scattered such discouraging reports that others who had planned to move declined to do so. Nevertheless, about a third of them remained in Kansas and of this portion a fairly large number attained a creditable degree of prosperity.

The years of the later eighties and the early nineties also witnessed a few small interstate movements of Negroes.¹³ For a long time it was the custom of employers in the mineral districts of the Appalachian Mountains to hire only foreign labor to do their work, but during the time just referred to this labor failed to satisfy the demand. In order to meet this emergency the employers at once dispatched their agents to different parts of the South to appeal to the Negroes for their labor. The efforts of these agents were not without effect, because many Negroes soon flocked to the mining districts of Birmingham, Alabama, to those of East Tennessee, and to those of West Virginia. Also, large numbers went to southern Ohio, where they were employed in the places of white laborers, who were on a strike, demanding higher wages.

As is evident in the preceding citations, the Negroes of the South are inclined not only to move to the North and West, but are also prone to move about freely within the South. This can be further substantiated by a brief study of the interdivisional movements of the Negro population of the South. In 1910, according to the Federal Census, it was found that 1.4 per cent of the Negroes living in the South Atlantic Division, 5.8 per cent of those residing in the East South Central Division, and 13.1 per cent of those in the West South Central Division, were born in places outside these respective sections. On the other hand, it was shown that the South Atlantic Division registered a loss of 392,927 from its Negro population, the East South Central a loss of 200,876, whereas the West South Central Division revealed a net gain of 194,658 in its Negro population. Thus, while two divisions lost, the third gained

¹³ Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, p. 146.

heavily by interdivisional Negro migration.¹⁴ This tendency toward interdivisional migration on the part of Negroes is, however, exhibited in a less degree than is the case on the part of whites. In 1910, 16.6 per cent of the Negroes had moved to other States than those in which they were born, whereas 22.4 per cent of the whites were found in States other than those in which they were born.¹⁵

Likewise, the Negroes are inclined to move about freely from section to section within the bounds of the North and West. In 1910, 47 per cent of the Negroes living in the New England Division, 52.3 per cent of those in the Middle Atlantic Division, 50.4 per cent of those in the East North Central Division, 32.1 per cent of those in the West North Central Division, and 80 per cent of those living in the Mountain Division and 77.7 per cent of those living in the Pacific Division, were born, in each case, in places outside of these sections.¹⁶ Each section showed also a loss of a certain per cent of its total native Negro population through migration to some other division. In this respect, New England showed a loss of 18.5 per cent, the Middle Atlantic States a loss of 10.5 per cent, the East North Central 16.2 per cent, the West North Central 18.2 per cent, the Mountain 43.9 per cent, and the Pacific 26.4 per cent.¹⁷ While this was the case, each division, nevertheless, received in turn, through migration from other places, enough newcomers to show a decided gain in its total Negro population. These gains in numbers were as follows:¹⁸

New England	20,310	West North Central	40,479
Middle Atlantic	186,384	Mountain	13,229
East North Central	119,649	Pacific	18,976

While much of the Negro migration has been interdivisional movements within the three major sections of this

¹⁴ *Negro Population in U. S., 1790-1915*, Bureau of Census, pp. 69-70.

¹⁵ *Journal of Pol. Econ.*, 25: 1040, D. '17.

¹⁶ *Negro Population in U. S., 1790-1915*, Bureau of Census, pp. 69-70.

¹⁷ *Negroes in the U. S.*, Bulletin 129, p. 17. Census Bureau.

¹⁸ *Negro Population in U. S., 1790-1915*, Bureau of Census, pp. 69-70.

country, yet a very considerable amount of it has been directed from the South to the North and West. Between 1870 and 1910, a period of forty years, there was a marked increase in the number of Negroes who were born in the South but who had migrated to the North. In 1870 the number was 149,000, but in 1910 it had increased to 440,534.¹⁹ This latter estimate is undoubtedly much less than the actual number of migrants, for it does not account for those who might have died or returned to the South or elsewhere before the taking of the Federal Census. Moreover, it is a fact that since the Civil War the Negro population of the North has been increasing faster than that of the South. In 1860 there were 344,719 Negroes in the North; in 1910 there were 1,078,336, an increase of 212.8 per cent for the fifty years' period. In 1920 there were 1,472,448 Negroes in the North, an increase of 43.8 per cent in ten years. In the West there were 78,591 in 1920. In the South, on the other hand, during the period from 1870 to 1910, the rate of increase was only 111.1 per cent. From 1910 to 1920 there was an increase of only 1.9 per cent whereas there was between 1900 and 1915 an increase of 10.4 per cent in that section in the Negro population in the South. During the past fifty years, therefore, the relative increase of Negroes in the North has been more than double that of the Negro population in the South. Before 1860 every census, except that of 1840, showed a greater relative increase in the Negro population of the South than in that of the North. Since that time, however, this condition has been reversed.²⁰ This increase of the Negro population in the North is undoubtedly due to migration from the South, and not to natural increase, because the vital statistics of Northern communities show that the Negro birth-rate is barely sufficient to balance the death-rate.²¹

Not only have Negroes been moving from the South to the North and West, but they have also been migrating

¹⁹ *Negro Population in U. S., 1790-1915*, Bureau of Census, p. 65.

²⁰ Scroggs, W. D., *Jour. Pol. Econ.*, 25: 1038, D. '17.

²¹ *Ibid.*, D. '17.

from these latter sections to the South. Immediately after the Civil War a small number of Negroes left the North and made their way to the South.²² This movement was composed of intelligent Negroes who had been fortunate enough to enjoy some of the educational opportunities of the North and who, because of this equipment, felt that they might be of service to the race during the Reconstruction period in the South. They were the ones who became the antagonists of the Carpet-baggers—the arch-corrupters of the governments of the Southern States. There were, however, other reasons why these men went South. In the first place, some had found northern communities so hostile to them that their progress was impeded; in the next place, many desired to reunite with their relatives from whom they had been separated by their flight from slavery; finally, others moved in response to a spirit of adventure to enter a new field which offered opportunities of all sorts.

The Federal Census of 1910, moreover, furnishes evidence of Negro movement from the North and West to the South.²³ This report shows that during that decade 41,489 Negroes who were born in the North and West were living in the South. This migration from these former sections to the South, though less considerable in volume than the migration from the South, is, nevertheless, proportionately greater when considered in relation to the Negro population born in these two sections than the migration from the South when the latter movement is, likewise, considered in its relation to the total Negro population born in the South. Thus the 41,489 Negroes born in the North and West but living in the South in 1910 constituted 6.5 per cent of the total Negro population born in the North and West, whereas the 440,534 Negroes born in the South but residing in the North formed only 4.8 per cent of the total Negro population born in the South.

The fact that this recent Negro migration, as has been

²² Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, pp. 123-4.

²³ *Negro Population in the U. S., 1790-1915*, p. 65.

stated, was a movement to the large cities and industrial centers of the North and West should give no occasion for surprise, because this has been in progress for more than three decades. During this period the Negroes have shown a decided tendency to flock to the large cities of the North and West, and also to those of the South. This is verified by the discovery that since 1880 nine cities of the North and West have shown considerable increase in their Negro population. These attractive cities thus popularized are as follows: Boston, Greater New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati, Evansville, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis. The increase for these nine cities between 1880 and 1890 was about 36.2 per cent; between 1890 and 1900 it was about 74.4 per cent; from 1900 to 1910 about 37.4 per cent; and from 1910 to 1920 about 50 per cent. In the first decade the increase was more than three times the increase of the total Negro population; in the second it was more than four times as large; in the third the increase was nearly three times larger; and in the fourth nearly five times as large as the increase of the same population. Likewise, during the same period there was a great Negro influx to the larger cities of the South, but the rate of increase was less than that of the Northern cities. In fifteen Southern cities the percentage of increase was about 38.7 per cent during the first decade; during the second about 20.6 per cent; and from 1900 to 1916 the increase (based on figures for sixteen cities) was about the same as that of the preceding decades.²⁴

These numerous instances of previous Negro movements show that the recent migration is no new and strange phenomenon, that Negroes, like other elements of the population of the United States, have shown a tendency since their emancipation to move from place to place. This recent exodus was simply a part of a long series of movements which have been in progress for more than half a century. It is, therefore, much like the others and differs

²⁴ Haynes, G. E., *New York Times*, Nov. 12, 1916, II, 12: 1.

from them only in its immense volume. In the course of this migration, as we observed, the number of Negroes who moved to the North and West was probably a half million—a number which perhaps exceeds or certainly equals that which resulted from all other movements from the South to the North during a period of forty years. Herein alone, if such a view of it can be held at all, lies its strangeness and remarkability as a social phenomenon.

CHAPTER III

SOURCE, VOLUME, DESTINATION, AND COMPOSITION

The exodus of the Negroes during the years from 1916 to 1918 occurred with such suddenness and attained such an immense volume that for a time it appeared to many observers that the whole "Black Belt" was shifting itself northward. Inasmuch as at the very time this migration reached its zenith this country had just entered into a state of war with Germany, it attracted almost nationwide attention, and from some quarters the fear was that it would have the effect, either directly or indirectly, of obstructing the National Government in its prosecution of the war. Numerous also were the apprehensions of the economic, political, and social problems that might follow in the wake of this movement. On almost every hand, therefore, the discussions concerning this migration became legion, and varying were the opinions expressed regarding its causes and its probable effects upon the sections of the country involved and upon the migrants themselves.

It is uncertain as to the exact time when this movement began, because it was going on some time before any notice was taken of it. It is known, however, that conditions favorable to its beginning were manifest shortly after the outbreak of the European War, when, on account of this catastrophe, immigration practically ceased and thousands of alien laborers departed for their native lands. This caused a serious labor shortage in the Northern industries, and in order to obviate this employers, during the spring of 1915, sent agents into the South to seek Negro laborers. If, as a result of the efforts of these agents, Negroes were induced to go North, then the number of those who moved was so small and in such scattered in-

stances as to make it unworthy of being called a migration. This view is taken because it was not until nearly a year afterward that Negroes began to move in numbers sufficiently large to attract public notice.

The Negro migration in its truest sense, therefore, had its beginning in 1916 and was precipitated as follows: "A national philanthropic organization arranged with some Northern tobacco growers to import Negro students from some of the Southern private institutions for summer work and early in May, 1916, brought the first two trainloads from Georgia. Then the agent of a large Northern railroad, taking advantage of the publicity given this venture, used the name of this organization to get migrants to come North."²⁵ Other railroads and steel mills were also in great need for laborers and thus sent their agents in the South to solicit labor. These agents moved about through the States of the South and offered at first free transportation to the prospective laborers and pictured to them in very glowing terms the high wages and advantages of the North. This they did not have to do very long, "for the news spread like wild-fire. It was like the gold fever in '49. Negroes sold their simple belongings and in some instances valuable land and property and flocked to the Northern cities, even though they had no objective work in sight."²⁶ Regarding this same point, Mr. Ray Stannard Baker holds that during the spring of 1916 "trains were backed into Southern cities and hundreds of Negroes were gathered up in a day, loaded into the cars and whirled away to the North. Instances are given showing that Negro teamsters left their horses standing in the streets or deserted their jobs and went to the trains without notifying their employers or even going home."²⁷

The next question which seems in order is whence came these migrants. As far as is known up to now they came

²⁵ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. of Labor, p. 121.

²⁶ Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 569, Feb. 17, 1917.

²⁷ Baker, Ray S., *World's Work*, 34: 315, July, 1917.

largely from thirteen of the Southern States and from those lying mainly east of the Mississippi River. These States are as follows: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia—the cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane regions of the South.²⁸ Of these the States which paid the heaviest toll in the number of migrants are Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and Tennessee. In this respect Mississippi stands first, Alabama second, and Georgia third.²⁹

When we come to the consideration of the number of Negroes who left the South during the course of this movement we find here much uncertainty. This state of affairs is due partly to the fact that the very beginning of the movement was unknown to those who might have been interested in taking a census of those departing and partly to the fact that perhaps after the movement was known to be in operation no counting was resorted to because no one believed that the exodus would amount to anything of importance. When, however, the exodus reached such proportions as to demand serious attention, steps were at once taken to ascertain its volume.

Numerical estimates regarding the size of this migration have been made in different ways.³⁰ In one case they have been based upon the statements of observers who have watched trainloads leave the South, in another they have been based upon the growth of numbers in different Northern cities, in still another upon records of insurance companies, and finally upon the number of railway tickets sold to Negroes. On these bases estimates have ranged from 150,000 to upwards of 750,000. To illustrate this, a few examples will be cited. Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois estimated that 250,000 Negroes had migrated to the North during 1916-17.³¹ The estimate of the Colored Citizens'

²⁸ *Lit. Digest*, 54: 1914, Jn. 23, 1917.

²⁹ Dillard, James H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 11.

³⁰ Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

Patriotic League was 300,000,³² and that of the Chairman of the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes was 350,000.³³ Dr. James H. Dillard set the minimum at 150,000 and the maximum at 350,000,³⁴ and Mr. Ray Stan-
nard Baker put the number up to 400,000.³⁵ From these various estimates given it is at once obvious that no accurate statement as to the number of Negroes who left the South can be made. It is known, however, that a very large number must have moved, because in many instances the Negro population in villages, towns and counties in some of the Southern States was greatly depleted, while the same population of Northern urban communities increased from one to four-fold. The census shows that in 1920 there were in the North and West only 472,418 more Negroes than there were in those sections in 1910. It is clear that a smaller number went North, for there was some natural increase, and we have the fact that many have returned³⁶ to warrant the conclusion.

In this discussion of the volume of the migration it may not be out of place to show how the various States of the South furnished their quota toward making up this total number of migrants. In this regard our data are incomplete in that they were compiled some time before the movement was checked. The following table,³⁷ however, will give one some notion as to the number of Negroes who left each State affected by this movement:

Alabama	90,000	Tennessee	22,632
Virginia	49,000	Kentucky	21,855
North Carolina	35,576	Louisiana	16,912
Mississippi	35,291	Florida	10,291
South Carolina	27,560	Texas	10,870
Arkansas	23,628	Oklahoma	5,836
Georgia	48,897		

³¹ *The Crisis*, 14: 63-66, June, 1917.

³² Horwill, H. W., *Contemp. Rev.*, 114: 299, Sept., 1918.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

³⁴ *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 11.

³⁵ Baker, R. S., *World's Work*, 34: 315, July, 1917.

³⁶ Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

³⁷ *Lit. Digest*, 54: 1914, June 23, 1917.

It has already been indicated that this movement was directed northward, but for the sake of accuracy it is better to say that it was directed toward points in the North and West. The movement was on the whole a great rush on the part of the Negroes to the large cities and industrial centers of these two sections of the country. Within these two divisions the Negroes widely distributed themselves, going as far north as Minnesota and as far west as the Pacific Coast States. In general the destination points of the migrants were found in the following States:⁴¹

California	Missouri
Connecticut	Nebraska
Delaware	New Jersey
Illinois	New York
Indiana	Ohio
Iowa	Oregon
Kansas	Pennsylvania
Massachusetts	Washington
Minnesota	Wisconsin
Michigan	

In this connection there might be raised the question as to the distribution of these thousands of migrants in these States of the North and West; and here again it must be stated that complete and accurate data are lacking, because no thorough study in this regard has yet been made. We have, however, some partial estimates which will go to show something of this distribution of the migrants in the various States. These estimates are for Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Connecticut.

The number of Negroes who migrated to Pennsylvania is estimated at 84,000. Of this number 33,500 were in Philadelphia and 18,500 in Pittsburgh. The other 32,000 migrants were scattered in various numbers in Steelton,

³⁸ Dillard, J. H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, U. S. Rep. Dept. Lab., p. 11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴¹ Scott, E. J., *Negro Migration During The War*, p. 71.

Harrisburg, Coatesville, Chester, Johnstown, Altoona, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Easton, Reading, Erie, Oil City, Franklin and Stoneboro.⁴² As many of these returned home or migrated to some other point in the North, even the census of 1920 does not enable one to make an accurate estimate.

The estimated number of migrants in Ohio was 37,000, 10,000 of whom were in Cleveland and 6,000 in Cincinnati. The other 21,500 were located in the following cities and towns: Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, Canton, Akron, Middletown, Chillicothe and Portsmouth. More than 3,000 of them were settled in camps of the Baltimore and Ohio and Pennsylvania railroads, and with contractors and traction companies in different places.⁴³

The total number of migrants received by New Jersey was 25,000. Of this number 7,000 were in Newark. Jersey City, Trenton, Wrightstown, and South Jersey had each 3,000. Bayonne, Paterson and Perth Amboy together received 4,000. The rest were scattered in Camden, Carney's Point, and in the railroad camps in Jersey City and Weehawken.⁴⁴

Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Connecticut have the following estimates: Between 1916 and 1918, 23,320 migrants went to Indiana, most of whom stopped in Indianapolis and Evansville;⁴⁵ 24,390 found their way to Michigan and settled for the most part in Detroit;⁴⁶ in Illinois, 24,000 were in Chicago alone;⁴⁷ and in Connecticut the city of Hartford reported 3,200 newcomers among its Negro population.⁴⁸

In order to obtain a comprehensive view of any migration something should be known about its composition as well as its volume. As regards this particular movement

⁴² Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 157.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-8.

⁴⁵ *Negro Migration*, Rep. Home Missions Council, Jan., 1919.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 117.

⁴⁸ Wright, J. A., *Letter on Conditions Among Negro Migrants in Hartford*.

it can be said that first of all it was a mass movement and not a movement of Negro leaders. It was composed of the large numbers of Negro laborers and artisans who, being very sorely pressed by adverse economic and social conditions, as will be shown later on, refused to seek the advice of their leaders, but pushed forward of their own accord with a determination to find the way for themselves.⁴⁹ This great mass, from the standpoint of habitation, was made up of two separate and distinct classes,⁵⁰ namely, rural and urban. The rural class was by far the most ignorant, owing to the lack of educational advantages in the rural districts of the South. They were for the most reared upon farms and their occupation was that of farm labor. It is said also that from this class came the majority of the Negroes who migrated from the South.⁵¹

On the basis of the economic, social and moral status, moreover, the members of this movement were composed of three types.⁵² The first type consisted of the less responsible characters, the younger men, mostly single, who immediately responded to the promises of high wages and of free transportation made by labor agents. It was undoubtedly the presence of this type in such large numbers in the North that led Professor F. D. Tyson, of the University of Pittsburgh, to the conclusion that the outstanding fact of the Negro migration from the South was that it was preponderately a movement of single men; and certainly 70 or 80 per cent of the migrants in the Northern States were without family ties, as is evidenced by the advanced reports of the Bureau of the Census showing a change of sexual ratio of the population of some Southern States.⁵³ Thousands of this type were imported by the railroads to the North, but they proved to be very unreliable workers. They did not stick to their work but moved from

⁴⁹ Du Bois, W. E. B., *Survey*, 38: 227, June 2, 1917.

⁵⁰ Edens, B. M., *Survey*, 38: 511, Sept. 8, 1917.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

⁵³ *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. of Lab., p. 145.

place to place, thus furnishing in industry what some have termed the "floaters" or "birds of passage."

The second type was composed of industrious, thrifty, unskilled workers.⁵⁴ These for the most part were men with families or other dependents. It was the custom for the men to go ahead first, earn money, and at the same time observe conditions to ascertain whether they were favorable enough to warrant their sending for their families to join them in the North. If things were favorable, their families soon followed. Many of these, because of hard working and living conditions in the South, were forced to accept, ready, free transportation and promises of work and of high wages just as did the members of the first type. A good many of them, however, had small savings which they used to pay their travelling expenses. In some cases, in leaving their homes, the migrants departed from the usual custom of the men going ahead and leaving the families behind, by taking their wives and children to the North with them in the beginning; in others, only the wives accompanied their husbands, while the children were left behind with relatives or friends to be sent for at some future time.

In the next place, the third type of migrants consisted of a rather small group of skilled artisans, business and professional men who shared the dissatisfaction and restlessness of the common laborers.⁵⁵ For this group, moving from the South became a necessity because the migration had deprived it of the patronage of the rank and file from which its means of subsistence had been derived. Many of these, however, were in good circumstances, having been in possession of good positions, cash money and considerable property. That this was the case the following citations will show: In regard to the economic condition of the Negroes leaving Alabama, the *Birmingham Age-Herald* said, "It is not the riff-raff of the race, the worthless Negroes, who are leaving in such large numbers. There are, to be sure, many

⁵⁴ Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, May 4, 1918.

poor Negroes among them who have little more than the clothes on their backs, but others have property and good positions which they are sacrificing in order to get away at the first opportunity.”⁵⁶ It is also reported that highly skilled Negro workmen went to Michigan, Ohio, and Massachusetts with fairly large sums of money from the sale of their possessions in the South.⁵⁷ A study of the financial conditions of 2,500 Negro migrants upon their arrival in Coatesville, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, furthermore, revealed that many had brought with them sums ranging from \$50 to \$150, realized from selling their homes in the South. Their desire was to purchase new homes in Philadelphia, but in this they were disappointed, because very few houses were available for sale or rent.⁵⁸ Migrants of this type gladly sacrificed their means and earnings to leave the South, feeling that by so doing they were making an advance to a life of greater freedom.

⁵⁶ *Survey*, 38: 227, Je. 2, 1917.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 38: 28, April 7, 1917.

CHAPTER IV

CAUSES OF THE RECENT NEGRO MIGRATION

In the study of the migration of any group or groups of mankind a consideration of its causes is highly important, because it seems that therein largely lies much of the significance of the movement. It has already been seen that for every migration there must be some definite cause, since man always moves in response to a rational impulse. Moreover, we saw that the cause must be a very powerful one, because it is the tendency of men to become attached to the locality in which they find themselves. In the investigation of this particular movement under consideration, we are, therefore, justified in seeking to know its causes; and this seems the more legitimate because we desire greatly to know why it was that at this particular time, perhaps more, or, at least, as many Negroes left their Southern homes for points in the North and West than did through a series of migrations which had been in progress for forty years.

The fundamental and immediate cause of this Negro exodus is economic, the basic and predominant cause of most of the movements of modern times. Its sudden occasion had its origin in the great labor shortage at the North, which was due to conditions growing out of the European War. This great war had the effect of cutting off the large and accustomed immigration stream from Europe and of withdrawing from this country thousands of foreign-born residents who were needed in the service of their respective native lands. Northern employers who had been dependent on them for their labor soon faced a serious shortage of labor, on the one hand, while, on the other, they saw their contracts with European concerns for war supplies increase tremendously. Being hard pressed for labor, these owners and operators of the various industrial enterprises,

as a last resort, turned to the South and began to solicit Negro labor in order to meet their demands. Thus a Negro exodus from the South was started, and we say that the cause of it was economic. This statement, however, does not adequately cover the ground, because, as has already been seen, a migration is usually the result of the operation of a complexity of causes and not the result of any one cause. Therefore, we shall say that this Negro movement was due to the workings of a complication of economic and social causes, but that of these causes the economic were overwhelmingly predominant.

In studying the forces or causes which were behind this movement, we find that they group themselves under two categories, namely, attractive and repellent. In this migration the Negroes were to a large extent both drawn and driven to break the ties which bound them to their respective localities. One has said that these causes may be grouped as beckoning and driving causes, the former arising from conditions in the North and the latter from conditions in the South.⁵⁹ The beckoning causes are as follows: high wages, little or no employment, a shorter working day than on the farm, less political and social discrimination than in the South, better educational facilities, and the lure of the city.⁶⁰ On the other hand, we have these given as the driving causes: "General dissatisfaction with conditions, ravages of boll-weevil, floods, change of crop system, low wages, poor houses on plantations, inadequate school facilities, unsatisfactory crop settlements, rough treatment, cruelty of the law officers, unfairness in courts, lynching, the desire for travel, labor agents, the Negro press, letters from friends in the North, and finally advice of white friends in the South, where crops had failed."⁶¹ At this juncture a specific consideration of these latter causes as they were operative in three of the Southern States will now be made. These States referred to are those which

⁵⁹ Scroggs, W. O., *Jour. Pol. Econ.*, 25: 1040-41, Dec., 1917.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 1040-41.

⁶¹ Dillard, J. H., Rep. U. S. Dept. of Lab., *Negro Migration*, pp. 11-12.

were foremost in contributing to the movement and are, namely, Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.

The causes of migration from Alabama⁶² were in the main economic. In the first place the opportunities afforded Negroes to earn their subsistence were greatly curtailed by the boll-weevil pest which swept over the State a few years ago. In the black belt counties cotton had been for several generations the sole crop, and its cultivation wholly dependent upon Negro labor. On the other hand, the Negroes were dependent upon the landowners or overseers for money for their subsistence. In the meantime the Negro farmers and laborers were never taught or encouraged to raise any crop other than cotton. When the boll-weevil pest came and made the raising of cotton an impossibility, it became necessary to shift from the cotton crop to another which was not liable to be troubled by the weevil pests. While the transition was being made, however, the prices of cotton fell considerably and thus made it very difficult for landowners and Negro farmers to borrow money at a reasonable rate of interest. The outcome was that the Negroes suffered much in their struggle to maintain themselves.

Secondly, in 1916 there was a serious crop shortage due to floods. During the spring and summer of that year the rivers overflowed their banks and the water therefrom destroyed the crops throughout a large portion of the state. This made it necessary for both farmers and tenants to find other means of livelihood. The customary advances in money and provisions to the Negro tenants were cut off and in many cases the owners of large plantations were compelled to advise their Negro laborers to move away. In other cases Negroes were so deeply in debt for provisions furnished them during the past winter, for rent and other causes that they were forced to forfeit their mules and other property in payment of these debts. These conditions brought on so much suffering among the Negroes

⁶² Dillard, J. H., Rep. U. S. Dept of Lab., *Negro Migration*, pp. 53-66, Snavely, T. R.

that some sunk to the depths of starvation and had to be given food by the Federal Government, through the Department of Agriculture, and also by the Red Cross organization.

In the next place, shortage of railroad cars was another prominent factor in causing migration from this State. Officials of railroad companies reported that fully half the miners who left the Birmingham districts did so because the companies were unable to obtain cars. In June, 1917, the chairman of the Birmingham District Subcommittee on Car Service stated that more than 7,000 cars of manufactured products had accumulated for shipment in the district.⁶³ Also, certain lumber companies were forced to reduce the number of their employees on account of the impossibility of getting their lumber products removed from the yards. The shortage of cars, therefore, necessitated the discharge of many men and at the same time prevented the employment of additional laborers.

There was, moreover, a great demand for labor in the North, rendered effective by offers of higher wages than those paid in Alabama. There was at this time too a great surplus of labor throughout those sections affected by the boll-weevil, floods, and shortage of cars, which was ready to respond to this demand. This demand was made known to the migrants by Northern labor agents who played the part of middlemen in this exodus. The migration, through them, was made easy by the furnishing of free transportation and by the making of glowing promises to the Negro migrants.

Another potent influence was that of the persuasion of friends and relatives already in the North. In 1917, when an investigation of the movement was made, it was found that this was the principal influence operating to move the Negroes to the North. Former residents of some of the rural districts of the South who had gone North and secured a foothold wrote letters back to their friends and

⁶³ Snavely, T. R., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 58-66.

relatives telling them of their success in the new environment. They depicted in these missives wages which seemed fabulous sums when compared with those received in the South, told of the good conditions of their surroundings, and of numerous advantages and opportunities which they were enjoying, but which had been impossible for them to enjoy while in the South. Negro men, moreover, frequently sent large sums of money to transport their families to the North, and frequently sons in the North sent neat sums back to their parents in the South. These letters containing glowing reports concerning Northern conditions, and the large remittances to relatives and friends, played no small part in inducing thousands to move to try their fortunes in the new environment.

In Georgia⁶⁴ we find that the migration was due to a complex of economic and social causes in the form of low wages, poor conditions of labor, lynching, minor injustices in the courts and dissatisfaction with educational facilities. In regard to the first cause, it is known that at the time of the migration wages in this State were extremely low. In 1916 some counties paid only \$10 and \$12 a month for farm labor; others paid \$13 and \$15 a month for the same kind of labor. After the movement got well started, however, there was a tendency on the part of most of the farmers to advance wages a little, so that some counties showed an average of \$14, others \$17, and not a few others as much as \$20 a month. It should be added that these wages were in most cases supplemented by free housing and sometimes by food.

In another instance it was found that many Negroes left the farming districts because of unsatisfactory labor conditions due to failure on the part of the planters to keep in close touch with their laborers. There was utter neglect on their part to look after certain details of plantation life as they particularly affected the single men. For example, in many cases, no provision was made to

⁶⁴ Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 86-89.

have their food properly cooked, their clothes mended, to keep them supplied with fresh meat, to repair the houses in which they lived, and to furnish them with gardens. On the other hand, it was noted that those planters who carefully looked after these details had no difficulty in holding their laborers.

In regard to lynching as a cause of migration from Georgia, it is not easy to state exactly its effect on the movement, because the lynchings which occurred immediately before and during the migration were in the boll-weevil section where the economic conditions were also at their worst. Nevertheless, several planters whose premises were crossed by lynching parties held that their losses in regard to labor were heavier than those of the surrounding plantations because of the state of terror into which their tenants had been thrown by these lawless bands. In two instances occurring respectively in 1915 and 1916, in the boll-weevil section of this State, moreover, lynching parties killed not only the guilty Negroes but also others who were innocent. In another instance the mob, after murdering the criminal and terribly beating and terrorizing many others not implicated in the crime, proceeded across the county and killed the mother and another relative of the accused. These bloody deeds had the effect of developing in the Negroes a feeling of insecurity of life and thus caused them to seek the North as a place of refuge.

Another reason why Negroes left Georgia was the resentment of the minor injustices done to them in the courts. In this State, and in a number of others as well, there prevails a system whereby the county and police officials are compensated by a fee for their services, that is, they are paid so much a head for every man they arrest. The effect of this system is to render these officials overzealous in rounding up Negroes for gambling, drinking and other petty infractions of the law. As punishment for these small violations of the law Negroes are usually sentenced

to work on the county roads for certain periods of time. In the rural districts where recreational facilities are wretchedly poor, Negroes feel themselves justified in indulging in these things as means of amusement and, therefore, when they are arbitrarily arrested and severely punished therefor, they feel that gross injustice has been done to them.

The poor educational facilities in Georgia, furthermore, were a source of dissatisfaction which caused many to leave. A recent report on the educational conditions in the State showed that the per capita expenditure in public school teachers' salaries for each white child between six and fourteen years of age is about six times the per capita expenditure for each Negro child between the same ages. It is also a fact that up to 1917 the only provision made by the State for agricultural, industrial, high and normal schools was an appropriation of \$8,000 as an aid to the Georgia State Agricultural and Mechanical School, which is largely supported by Federal funds. The Negro teachers, moreover, are poorly trained and their salaries are unusually small.⁶⁵

The causes for Negro migration from Mississippi⁶⁶ are significant. In the first place, there was in southeast and east Mississippi a lack of capital for carrying labor through the fall and early winter until time to start a new crop. This lack of capital was brought about by one or more of three causes, namely, a succession of short crops, the more recent advent of the boll-weevil, and a destructive storm in the summer of 1916. In the second place, there was a reorganization of agriculture behind the boll-weevil ravage, which required a smaller number of laborers a hundred acres. In the next place, migration was due to the hunger wages paid in this State. The wages ranged from seventy-five cents on farms in the southwest to one dollar or one dollar and a quarter a day in northern counties. These were wholly inadequate to maintain the Negro laborers in

⁶⁵ Woolfer, T. J., Jr., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 86-89.

⁶⁶ Leavell, R. H., *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

a high state of physical efficiency. The attractions of the Northern urban and industrial centers too were also causes of the movement from Mississippi. These attractions were of two kinds, namely, (1) decidedly higher wages for unskilled labor, and (2) better living conditions, such as housing, which seemed superior to the rough cabins of Southern plantations, better chances of obtaining justice in the courts in cases where both whites and Negroes were involved, better schools than Mississippi afforded, and equality of treatment in public conveyances such as street cars and railway trains.

In the foregoing pages we have noted the causes of the migration from three of the Southern States. Here we desire to pursue this line of thought a bit farther, though, we hope, not at the risk of monotony, in order to emphasize these causes in such a manner as to give an impression of what was in general back of this movement from all the states involved. In this regard we are to be guided by the testimonies of Mr. W. T. B. Williams, who, under the direction of the U. S. Department of Labor, made a general survey of the conditions which gave rise to this Negro exodus.

One cause of the migration which seemed to have been general was low wages. Small pay was indeed one of the leading grievances of the Negroes. Up to 1917 on Southern farms common laborers received from fifty cents to seventy-five cents, and rarely a dollar, a day. The wages for women and children were thirty-five and forty cents a day. It is true, in some instances, meals were given with these wages, but oftener this was not the case. The following examples are typical of the wages for common laborers in such industries as saw-mills and cotton oil mills:

Newbern, N. C.	\$1.00 to \$1.50. ⁶⁷
Americus, Ga.	1.25
Jackson, Miss.	1.25 to 1.75.
Laurel, Miss.	1.65 to 2.00.
Hattiesburg, Miss.	1.40 to 1.65.

⁶⁷ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 103.

There were, moreover, serious unsatisfactory farming conditions which did much to drive the Negroes from the South.⁶⁸ One of these was the injustice done to tenants by their landlords. The custom was for the tenant to furnish the stock, plant, cultivate and gather the crop, and to receive in return one-half of everything, except the cotton seed, which was by far the most important part of the crop, and of which he received nothing. When the crop was made the tenant could not sell it, because the law of the State gave only the landlord a clear title to any cotton which was sold. In order to hold the Negro to the land the landlord often employed this legal advantage by selling the whole crop and refusing to settle with the Negro till late in the spring, when the next crop had been well started. Then, the Negro was well attached to the farm and was forced to accept anything or any terms which the landlord chose to offer. In some cases Negroes dared not ask any settlement for fear of bringing down upon them the wrath of their landlords. In other instances often the landlords made no settlement and arbitrarily dismissed the whole matter by telling the Negroes that they were in debt.

Another general grievance growing out of unsatisfactory farming conditions was the exorbitant rates of interest charged Negro farmers by merchants and planters for money borrowed to aid them in raising their crops. The system of lending sums of money was thus: The tenant would contract for a money loan from the first of January, but he received no money till the first of March and none after the first of August. Notwithstanding this, the Negro tenant was compelled to pay interest on the whole amount borrowed for the entire year and sometimes even for the extra months up to the time of the deferred settlement. This practice became so common and so obnoxious that the Comptroller of the Treasury of the United States declared to the Southern banks that it was usury and threatened the

⁶⁸ What will be said from this point on through the remainder of this chapter will be based largely on information taken from the preceding reference, pp. 100-111.

closing of these banks if this practice was continued. That this practice was a fact and had been long-standing the words of a prominent Southern man will show. "There is money in farming," says he, "lots of it, but the Negro farmer has been systematically robbed by the white man since the close of the Civil War. If the Negro farmers were to be returned all the interest in excess of 8 per cent charged them for money advanced them they would to-day be living in brownstone mansions, just as the rich white advancers do."⁶⁹

Rough and cruel treatment of Negroes by whites, moreover, was also an important driving cause behind the recent exodus from the South. It is reported that this sort of treatment was meted out to Negroes in many of the small towns and villages; but it was more prevalent and worse on the farms and plantations. On the latter, especially in the lower part of the South, the beating or flogging of laborers was such a common occurrence that these places came to be considered veritable peon camps. Besides, in many of the saw-mill establishments overseers and bosses were accustomed to knock Negroes around with pieces of timber or anything else that happened to be within their reach at the needy time. This brought on much dissatisfaction and caused the Negroes to become determined to leave at their first opportunity.

Furthermore, the Negro press was a very influential factor in aiding the movement. This, however, was not a general thing, because most of the Negro publications, for various reasons, either remained silent or spoke only in a very feeble manner concerning the exodus. Two of these publications, nevertheless, were very outspoken on the whole matter, in that they urged the Negroes to leave the South by all means. The principal one of these was edited in Chicago and its appeal was made to the most lowly class of Negroes. During 1916 its circulation increased manifold, and in some sections its work in stimulating the move-

⁶⁹ Robertson, W. T., Mayor of Montgomery, Ala., *Contemp. Rev.*, 114: 300, Sept., 1918.

ment, perhaps, had more effect than that of all the labor agents put together. Knowing well the mental outfit of this class of Negroes, it pursued the policy of summing up the troubles and grievances of the Negroes, of constantly keeping them in the forefront, and of pointing out the way of escape from this unpleasant state of affairs. It continually emphasized in the most convincing ways the great advantages and opportunities which were awaiting the Negroes who would go North, and consistently omitted to mention any of the possible disadvantages that might be encountered in the new environment.

It must be noted, moreover, that a good deal of mere sentimentalism or irrational selection had much to do with the movement of many Negroes from the South. "The unusual amounts of money coming in," says an observer, "the glowing accounts from the North, and the excitement and stir of great crowds leaving, work upon the feelings of many Negroes. They pull up and follow the crowd almost without a reason. They are stampeded into action. This accounts in large part for the apparently unreasonable doings of many who give up good positions or sacrifice valuable property and good business to go North. There are also Negroes of all classes who profoundly believe that God has opened the way for them out of the restrictions and oppressions that beset them on every hand in the South; moving out is an expression of their faith."⁷⁰

In addition to these causes already given, we could enter into a discussion of the certain unsatisfactory conditions which undoubtedly had some effect on the migration. These are poor housing, inadequate street improvement, poor sewerage, water, and light facilities, exclusion from public parks, and segregating regulations.

⁷⁰ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 101.

CHAPTER V

THE EFFECTS OF THE NEGRO MIGRATION ON THE SOUTH

As we have noted the immensity, the make-up, and the causes of this movement, we are now justified in seeking to know something concerning its effects upon the South. If this movement had any effects upon the South, these undoubtedly must have been felt first and most in its economic interests; for, as we have seen, the majority of the migrants were laborers who left the farms and industries of this section in response to the great demand for labor in the North. That the South is almost wholly dependent on Negro labor is a truism, because for various reasons it has been unable to obtain any considerable amount of any other kind of labor. Its native white labor supply that is available to perform the menial work is considerably small, and very little of its labor force is drawn from the foreign-born element, which has been coming to this country in such large numbers during the years immediately preceding the beginning of the Great War. In 1910, when a study was made of the distribution of the immigrants to this country, it was found that 84 per cent of them were in the North, 9.7 per cent in the West, whereas only 5.4 per cent of them were in the South.⁷¹ In 1920, 82.9 per cent of the foreign born were in the North, 10.8 per cent in the West, and only 6.3 per cent in the South. We are aware of the fact also that previous to this Negro movement there existed a surplus of Negro labor due to adverse natural conditions in certain parts of the South, and that in order to remove this excess the migration was gladly welcomed. It happened, however, that when this superfluous labor was removed, the migration stream did not stop, but flowed on, and thus swept off a very large part of the labor that was necessary to carry on production on the farms and in the

⁷¹ Fairchild, H. P., *Immigration*, p. 226.

various other industries. We may set down labor shortage, then, as the first effect of the movement upon the South.

Although the South was in direst need of labor as a result of this movement, yet the danger therefrom was not as extensive and serious as it was once thought to be. This labor shortage did not have the effect of plunging the whole section into disaster. For the most part, real hardships were experienced only in certain sections, especially those that had contributed heavily to the movement. From the farming and industrial interests of those States struck hardest by this exodus came many objections to the movement, and these were taken as indications of losses and interruptions in these enterprises. It is said that in every State from the Carolinas to Mississippi there lay idle thousands of acres of land, which would have been put to use had labor been available. Even where good crops had been grown, in many places, there was question as to whether or not sufficient labor could be secured to harvest them.⁷² Again, in some instances, industries like farming had been completely paralyzed; in others they had been greatly retarded, owing to the necessity of breaking in new men to occupy the places of experienced workers who had left for the North. The lumber mills, mines, docks, and cotton oil mills all suffered from the effects of labor shortage.⁷³

As far as this lack of labor affected the South, these facts indicate what was true in a general way; but in order to obtain a better view of the situation let us refer to labor shortage as it existed in a few of the States that were struck exceedingly hard by the migration. A study of the labor situation in Mississippi⁷⁴ showed that while the supply of labor was considerably diminished by the migration, the demand for labor was altered. In some parts of the State the demand was decreased, in others it was increased. In those sections where agriculture

⁷² Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 98.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pages 98-99.

⁷⁴ Leavell, R. H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 17-19.

had had time since the invasion of the boll-weevil to reorganize itself on a mixed farming basis, with the emphasis placed on the raising of livestock, the demand for labor was decreased, and the wages were lowest, because this type of farming required less laborers a hundred acres than did the old type which emphasized mainly the raising of cotton. In East Mississippi much land lay idle, but it seemed that the shortage of labor there was due to lack of capital. A heavy migration stream flowed also from South Mississippi and resulted in cutting short the labor supply of the lumber mills and docks. On the whole, labor shortage in this State was quite general, inasmuch as after the movement started employers throughout the State were forced to advance wages from 10 per cent to 25 per cent.

Shortage of labor was a serious problem in Alabama,⁷⁵ especially in those sections of the State designated the "black-belt counties." Throughout these sections during 1917 much land lay idle, partly because of the scarcity of tenants and laborers, and partly because of the reluctance of landowners, merchants, and bankers to supply the capital necessary for cultivating it. The farm demonstration agent of Dallas County reported in 1917 a reduction of 3,000 in the number of plows usually operated. In these same counties farms owned and managed by lumber companies were for the most part deserted and in many cases the crops were given very feeble attention. In all parts of the State the lumber companies complained of a serious labor shortage.

In 1917 it was reported that no acute shortage of labor existed in either the rural or urban districts of Georgia, but that there could be found many instances of individual employers who needed more Negro labor. "If such labor were available," said an investigator, "from 700 to 1,200 (men) could be placed in the saw-mill and turpentine industries at \$1.50 and probably \$2.00 per day; perhaps 2,000 at \$1.75 and \$2.00 per day could be placed in shipbuilding in-

⁷⁵ Snavely, T. R., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 70-73.

dustries; (and) from 1,500 to 2,000 could be utilized from September to December in picking cotton at \$1.00, \$1.50 and \$1.75 per hundred pounds."⁷⁶

In North Carolina there was a scarcity of labor before the movement got well under way. In 1916 eighty-seven counties out of a total of one hundred counties reported a shortage of labor, and in many parts of the State farmers adopted the plan of raising live-stock instead of agricultural crops. Much land lay idle, and where this was not the case there was a noted increase in the use of farm machinery to supplement the meager labor supply. Especially acute was the demand for cotton pickers. On the whole, the labor situation became so serious that average wages for Negro labor were rapidly advanced beyond those of former times.⁷⁷

What then was the attitude of the South toward that movement? As has been seen, this Negro exodus, by causing a shortage of labor, threatened the economic well-being of many parts of the South. This being so, it is readily seen that those regions so affected could not ignore the movement. In fact, when the pressure was felt, keen interest in the whole matter was aroused and in some cases even much anxiety and apprehension were manifested. In this mood the South directed its attention to this unusual situation and resolved to meet the emergency by stopping the migration itself instead of first trying to remove its causes. In order to accomplish this it was necessary to use force, which was of two kinds, namely, (1) force in the form of moral suasion, and (2) certain devices which rest on physical strength.⁷⁸ The former weapon employed to check the movement took the form of strong and persuasive appeals on the part of Southern newspapers and Southern leaders to Negroes who were either leaving or who anticipated leaving the South. In these appeals the Negroes

⁷⁶ Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 90.

⁷⁷ Snively, T. R., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 73-74.

⁷⁸ Baker, R. S., *World's Work*, 34: 315-16, Je., 1917.

were told that they were better off in the South, that the southern white man was their friend and that living conditions in the North were far more difficult than those in the South. They cited as examples of this the cold climate of the North, the hard and heavy work, and asserted that even though wages in the North were high the cost of living was still higher. The Negroes, therefore, would do well to remain where they were.⁷⁹ In the employment of this weapon to check the movement the newspapers took the lead and carried on a well-organized campaign to frighten the Negroes out of the notion of leaving the South. Some papers carefully circulated false reports to the effect that many Negroes were returning to their homes because of unexpected hardships in the North. Others told of thousands of Negro men dying of cold and hunger in Northern cities, where the climate was so severe that icicles hung from one's nose and ears and one's breath actually turned to snow as it was exhaled.⁸⁰ These appeals and false reports, however, had no effect in checking the movement, and the South, therefore, was compelled to resort to more drastic means in order to achieve its end.

The first repressive move made by the South to check the movement was that against the labor agents of the North, who undoubtedly were the chief instrumentalities through which the migration was kept in operation. The method of procedure was to pass laws which either regulated or prohibited the exodus of laborers through the activity of labor agents. Many States already had such laws on their statute books, and where this was the case these laws were revised or were substituted by new ones.⁸¹ These laws usually took one of two forms, either excessive labor agents' license or requirements of State residence. These were the chief qualifications of any who desired to solicit labor to be employed outside the State so concerned. For the violation of these laws anyone was subject to ar-

⁷⁹ Baker, R. S., *World's Work*, 34: 315-16, Je., 1917.

⁸⁰ Horwill, H. W., *Contemp. Rev.*, 114: 302, Sept., 1918.

⁸¹ Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 120, May 4, 1918.

rest and upon conviction was either heavily fined or sentenced to terms of imprisonment with hard labor.

A few examples will show how these laws operated against labor agents or against any suspected of enticing labor away from the state. In Alabama, when the labor problem became very acute, laws were passed imposing heavy license fees upon labor agents. Any agent desiring to operate in that State was compelled to pay a license of \$500 to the State and \$250 to each county concerned. In addition, each city required of him a license of from \$300 to \$500. Thus the cost of soliciting labor in Alabama for each agent was upwards of \$1,000. In the "black belt" counties of this state a number of labor agents caught operating in violation of these laws were convicted and heavily fined, and upon failure to pay the same were sentenced to labor on the public roads. The cities and towns of the State of Florida enacted measures requiring a very high license of labor agents and providing the penalty of imprisonment in case of failure to comply with these regulations. In Jacksonville, Florida, for instance, there was passed an ordinance which stipulated that labor agents each should pay \$1,000 license fees for the privilege of recruiting labor to be sent outside of the State. The penalty for violation of this law was \$600 fine and sixty days in jail.⁸² Georgia also passed severe laws to check the operations of labor agents. In Macon⁸⁴ the City Council set the license fee of a labor agent at \$25,000, and required in addition a recommendation of said agent by ten local ministers, ten manufacturers, and twenty-five business men. In several counties of this State labor agents were arrested for violating these laws.⁸⁵ Four Southern cities and as many States brought lawsuits against a great Northern railroad for violation of the laws and ordinances regarding the soliciting of labor to be sent

⁸² Snavely, T. R., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 64-64.

⁸³ Scott, E. J., *Negro Migration During The War*, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁸⁵ Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 86.

outside the boundaries of these respective cities and States.⁸⁶ In some instances also Negro assistants of railroad labor agents were maltreated, arrested, and heavily fined.⁸⁷ For example, at Thomasville, Georgia, a Negro and a white man were arrested on the charge of being labor agents.⁸⁸ In another case, at Sumter, South Carolina, a popular Negro minister who was found at the railroad station bidding farewell to some of his parishioners, who were leaving for the North, was arrested as a labor agent.⁸⁹

Besides these tirades against the labor agents, drastic methods were adopted to prevent the Negroes from going North. These were resorted to mainly by the police and were so executed as to discourage movement from the South. In some cities police officers visited railroad stations, rounded up Negroes by hundreds, and took them to prison on the flimsiest sort of accusations. On the days following such arrests, however, all the Negroes who had been thus imprisoned were released.⁹⁰ An example of this is the occurrence at Savannah, Georgia, where on one occasion the police arrested and jailed every Negro who happened to be in the station regardless of where he might have been going. Sometimes, as was done once at Albany, Georgia, they destroyed the tickets of migrants who were waiting to board trains for the North.⁹¹ At Greenville, Mississippi, it was the custom to stop trains, drag Negroes therefrom, and prevent others from boarding them. Strangers were subjected to search in order to secure evidence which might prove them to be labor agents.⁹² The ticket agent at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, until restrained by the general superintendent, attempted to interfere with the

⁸⁶ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 121.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 121-23.

⁸⁸ Scott, E. J., *Negro Migration During The War*, p. 74.

⁸⁹ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 110.

⁹⁰ Horwill, H. W., *Contemp. Rev.*, 114: 301-302, Sept., 1918.

⁹¹ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 110.

⁹² Scott, E. J., *Negro Migration During The War*, p. 77.

movement by refusing to sell tickets to Negroes desiring to leave for the North.⁹³ Also, the Mayor of the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, tried to check the movement by requesting the President of the Illinois Central Railroad to use his influence to stop this road from carrying Negroes to the North. To this request the President replied that, while he was opposed to the Negro migration, his road, as a common carrier, could not either refuse to sell tickets to the Negroes or fail to provide them the necessary means of transportation.⁹⁴ Moreover, many Negroes who were not migrants were subjected on every hand to arbitrary arrests on mere petty charges in order to intimidate and terrorize them.

These repressive measures apparently had no effect in checking the movement, for Negroes continued to move to the North in large numbers. When this was realized, a changed state of affairs followed. The better portion of the public opinion of those States affected by the migration condemned this policy of force as a means of stopping the exodus, on the one hand, and on the other suggested the adoption of measures which would conciliate the Negroes, and thereby remove those conditions causing them to leave the South. This was urged by some of the editors of leading newspapers, and by leaders of other social agencies interested in problems regarding the relations between the races in the South. These editors were for the most part very frank about the whole matter, and, therefore, did not hesitate to make it known that in order to check the movement there was need of a square deal for the Negro, higher wages, and a more sympathetic attitude toward the aspirations and general improvement of the Negro race.⁹⁵

The following excerpts from the editorials of a few of these papers will show what this opinion was. *The Charlotte Observer* said:

⁹³ Scott, E. J., *Negro Migration During The War*, p. 77.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁹⁵ Dillard, J. H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 13.

"The real thing that started the exodus lies at the door of the farmer and is easily within his power to remedy. The Negro must be given better homes and better surroundings. Fifty years after the Civil War he should not be expected to be content with the same conditions which existed at the close of the War. We cannot blame him for no longer countenancing life in the windowless cabin, nor with being discontented with the same scale of remuneration for his labor that prevailed when farmers were unable to do anything better for him."⁹⁶

The Daily News of Jackson, Mississippi, moreover, had this to say:

"The Negro exodus is the most serious economic matter that confronts the people of Mississippi today. And it isn't worth while to sit around and cuss the labor agents either. That won't help us the least bit in getting to a proper solution. We may as well face the facts, even when the facts are very ugly and very much against us. The plain truth of the matter is the white people of Mississippi are not giving the Negro a square deal. And this applies not merely to Mississippi, but to all the other states in the South. How can we expect to hold our Negro labor when we are not paying decent living wages? Have we any right to abuse the Negro for moving to the Northern states where he is tempted by high wages when we are not paying him his worth at home? . . . Then, too, the Negro is not being given a square deal in the matter of education. In a majority of our rural districts especially the schools for Negro children are miserable makeshifts, the teacher often more ignorant than the pupils, little or nothing allowed for their support, and the children derive no benefits whatever. . . . The ugly fact remains that we have not been doing our duty by the Negro, and until we do there is no reason to hope for a better settlement of our industrial conditions."⁹⁷

The Progressive Farmer, too, another Southern organ, was of this opinion:

"Farm labor has always commanded smaller wages in the South than in other parts of the country. In 1910, the average monthly

⁹⁶ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 104.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

wage of male farm laborers in the South Atlantic States was only \$18.76, and in the South Central States, \$20.27, while in the North Atlantic and North Central States the average exceeded \$30, and in the Western States reached \$44.35. . . . We ought to face the competition of other sections, not by taxing and mobbing labor agents, but by treating our own labor so fairly that it will be willing to stay with us.''⁹⁸

Besides these we have the opinions of two other social agencies that were also in favor of the remedy of conciliation as a means of checking the exodus. These are the University Commission on Southern Race Questions and the Southern Sociological Congress. The former advocated as a check on the movement the giving to the Negroes a larger measure of those things which human beings hold dearer than material goods.⁹⁹ In its judgment some of these things were as follows: fair treatment, opportunity to labor and enjoy the legitimate fruits of labor, assurance of even-handed justice in the courts, good educational facilities, sanitary living conditions, tolerance, and sympathy. At its annual meeting in 1917 the Southern Sociological Congress expressed the belief that the movement could be stopped, not by repression, but by cooperation between peoples of both races.¹⁰⁰ Most of the speakers at this gathering recommended a getting together of the leaders of the whites and the blacks so that they might discuss the situation very frankly and thereby work out plans to ensure the Negro a square deal and a man's chance in the South.

These preceding views, however, were not at all the general opinion regarding the remedies to check the migration, for there was another element, representing the old South, which did not consider them with any degree of favor. It viewed the movement as a specific and temporary thing, and held that had there been no floods during 1916, and if the boll-weevil had not ravaged the cotton planta-

⁹⁸ Williams, W. T. B., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 110.

⁹⁹ Min. Univ. Com. on Southern Race Questions, pp. 48-48, 1917.

¹⁰⁰ *Survey*, 38: 428, Aug. 11, 1917.

tions, there would have been no migration, for the Negroes never would have been induced to go North. It alleged that the Negroes did not want more money, if the getting of it meant harder work; and that what the Negro needed was a soft climate. It also asserted that the relations between the two races were never so good as they were then. Hence this element favored standing aloof and allowing the movement to stop of its own accord.¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding this view of the situation, there prevailed the opinion that the remedy for checking the exodus lay in the adoption of those measures promotive of sympathy and kindness, and forthwith plans were effected with the aim of inducing the Negroes to remain and of inviting others who had departed to return to the South. The following are some of the chief measures which were adopted to achieve this end: (1) A general and substantial increase in wages; (2) movement on the part of the farmers to deal more fairly in business matters with the Negro tenants by making clear at the outset the terms of all contracts, and by keeping strict accounts and making prompt settlements with them; (3) the correcting of certain former abuses such as short weighing of coal, discounting of store checks, and unfair prices in the commissaries; (4) instituting of crop diversification in order to keep the laborers supplied with work the year round; (5) better housing; (6) better school conditions; and (7) the drawing closer together of the two races through the medium of county meetings for the study of problems growing out of racial relations. A typical example of this last-named policy is the "Community Congress" plan in Bolivar County, Mississippi. The essential feature of this body is a representative general committee composed of twenty-five white planters and business men, and five Negro leaders from the five supervisors' districts within the county. The function of this organization is to consider and offer solutions of any and all important problems pertaining to the community. There is, moreover, the Farm Extension

¹⁰¹ *Living Age*, 295: 58-59, Oct. 6, 1917.

Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce of Memphis, Tennessee, which was organized for the purpose of conducting educational campaigns to improve agricultural and rural conditions. This organization has extended its work from Tennessee into Mississippi and Arkansas, and has adopted the policy of employing Negroes to act as demonstrators among farmers of their own race in order to furnish the Negro farmers with greater incentive to become more skilful and industrious in their vocation.¹⁰²

Since we have seen the attitude of the white leaders of the South toward this movement, it might also be of interest to know what was the view of the Negro leaders in regard to this exodus of their race. In the first place, many of the local leaders in the South were much opposed to this movement, but hesitated to give outward expression to this for fear of rebuke from members of their race. Hence, their policy was that of maintaining silence about the whole matter. On the other hand, the editors of some of the leading Negro papers of the South were somewhat outspoken and were more or less inclined to be in sympathy with the movement. They nevertheless expressed regrets that the Negroes were leaving the South, but this did not in the least move them to do anything to help check the movement. They took the position that the migrants had not been given justice in economic, political, and social affairs, and that, therefore, they had no just grounds on which to base appeals to them to remain in the South. In fact, in view of these adverse circumstances, they felt that the Negroes could not be blamed for moving to the North.¹⁰³

Other leaders, however, especially those in the North, were more positive and frank as regards their attitude toward the movement. These may be roughly divided into two distinct classes, namely, the conservative and the radical. Those of the former class adhered largely to the

¹⁰² *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 15-113. See topics titled as follows: "Constructive Adjustments," "Means of Checking the Exodus," "Constructive Possibilities," and "Initial Remedies."

¹⁰³ Baker, R. S., *World's Work*, 34: 316, July, 1919.

view of Tuskegee Institute, which fosters the traditions of Booker T. Washington.¹⁰⁴ They advised the Negroes to remain in the South on the ground that it was there only that the Negro could become a landholder, and that there were chances for him to become a real estate owner almost at his own will. Some in this class felt also that the Great War would soon end and that after that the country would be flooded by immigrants from Europe, who would doubtless deprive thousands of Negroes of work in the North. They therefore counseled the Negroes to stay at home and to keep possession of their property, especially their property in land.

The radicals, on the other hand, who insist on equal rights for the race, boldly advised and urged the Negroes to come North. When this exodus was well under way one of the members of this class, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, spoke as follows: "There are not jobs for everybody; there is no demand for the lazy and casual; but trained, honest Negro laborers are welcome in the North at good wages just as they are lynched in the South for impudence. Take your choice."¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, others of this class, believing that immigration would not be a factor in the labor situation for a long time to come, likewise urged the Negroes to continue moving to the North. Their desire was to see the Negro population increase its size in such great proportions through this migration as to afford it the opportunity to exercise in the North economic and political power hitherto unknown.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ *Living Age*, 295: 59, Oct. 6, 1917.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁶ Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, p. 176.

CHAPTER VI

THE EFFECTS OF THE NEGRO MIGRATION ON THE NORTH

As the migration had its effects upon the South, it likewise influenced conditions in the North and West; but in the latter cases these effects were somewhat different from those produced upon the former section. It is almost obvious that these two sections could hardly escape without being affected, since they were suddenly invaded by a multitude of newcomers who belonged to a race different from that of the dominant elements in their respective populations. In these places, moreover, these migrants were seeking for the most part better opportunities in order to enhance their progress in the struggle for existence, and in so doing created new situations which undoubtedly had decided effects upon these sections.

The first noted effect was a tremendous increase in the Negro population of some of the large cities and industrial centers of these sections. It is estimated that this increase in some cases ranged from one to four-fold. For example, the Negro population of Detroit, Michigan, jumped from 5,751 to 41,532 by 1920. In 1917 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, showed an increase of 47.1 per cent in its Negro population. During the same decade Philadelphia added 49,632 to its black population; and it is reported that 25,000 Negro migrants went to Cincinnati, Ohio,¹⁰⁷ and 52,000 to Chicago, Illinois.¹⁰⁸ The census of 1920 shows that the increase in the Negro population of Cincinnati during the preceding decade was 9,987 and that of Chicago 65,491.

Notwithstanding this, these sections were certainly much gratified at this influx of Negroes, because it was meeting the unprecedented demand for labor. At this time the Ne-

¹⁰⁷ Haynes, G. E., *Survey*, 40: 116, May 4, 1918.

¹⁰⁸ White, W. F., *The Crisis*, 19: 113, Jan., 1920.

groes were sorely needed for economic purposes, and nothing was done to obstruct their coming in. That this was the case the following statement will show: "To-day the shutting down of immigration, due to the war," said *The New Republic*, "has created just such a demand for the Negroes. Colored men who formerly loafed on street corners are now regularly employed. Negro girls who found it once difficult to obtain good jobs at domestic service have leaped into popularity. The market for labor has taken up all the slack. There is a demand for all, for skilled workers, unskilled, semi-employables, Negroes. The employment agencies cannot meet the demand. Construction camps which formerly relied on Italian or Polish laborers now seek to secure an alternative supply of Negroes. Formerly the big contractor in the North could pick a few hunkies from a long line of eager applicants for work. He could get Poles, Italians, Greeks, in any number. . . . To-day he is willing to take black men, and finds it hard to get even them."¹⁰⁹

This most unusual demand for labor, coupled with the necessity of having to be met wholly by thousands of Negroes from the South, wrought a considerable change in the labor mores of the North. In its employment of these laborers the North was compelled to adopt a policy hitherto unknown. On this point let us proceed by referring to the following testimony. "Until recently," said a contributor to *The Living Age*, "the Negro in the northern cities was restricted to certain occupations that are unskilled and outside the range of organized labor. To-day he is being welcomed on the farms of New England and the Middle West and in the industrial centers, where hitherto the employer has not wanted him and the white workman has regarded him as a dangerous intruder. In Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and many other cities large numbers of Negroes are found in factories and workshops where until lately the Negro laborer was never admitted even as a visitor. This is especially true of the iron and steel works and the

¹⁰⁹ *New Republic*, 7: 213, July 1, 1916.

munition factories, while many thousands have been absorbed by the railroads and street railway companies."¹¹⁰

While the North was very desirous of the Negro migrants in order to utilize their labor, moreover, it was, nevertheless, ill-prepared to provide them proper dwelling places. The rush of the Negro laborers to this section suddenly overtaxed the capacity of the habitations allotted to Negroes, thus causing a demand for houses which far exceeded the supply. The result of this was the bringing on the hands of the North a serious housing problem which required immediate solution. The railroads were the first to attempt to meet the situation by adopting the method of erecting camps to house the large number of single men who had been imported from the South. These roads were the Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Ohio, New York Central, and Erie. The camps constructed by the Pennsylvania were wooden sheds covered with tar paper and equipped with sanitary cots, heat, bath, toilet and wash-room facilities, separate eating room and commissary. This road built thirty-five such camps, each capable of accommodating forty men. The camps of the other railroads consisted of freight cars and passenger coaches converted into sleeping and eating quarters for the men. In some cases old houses were renovated and used for the same purposes. Camps were also used by the large steel companies of Pennsylvania to house their workers. These were largely old barns and old houses which were transformed into living quarters. They were reported to be inferior to the railroads' camps in matters of equipment and sanitation.¹¹¹

The most difficult part of this housing question, however, was that of community housing, the problem of supplying men with families with adequate living quarters. An investigation of the housing conditions among migrants of this type in twenty cities of the North and West showed that everywhere this problem was very acute. In few cities,

¹¹⁰ *Living Age*, 295: 58, Oct. 6, 1917.

¹¹¹ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 145-48.

where the Negro migrants were mixed in with the whites, the former were provided with fairly satisfactory housing conditions, but were compelled to pay comparatively high rents for least desirable quarters. Exceptions, nevertheless, were found in these places where the invasion of white districts by Negro families had resulted in the moving out of the white residents. Here, very desirable houses for Negroes were available, but at rental rates far in advance of those formerly paid by the whites.¹¹² The small number of available houses and the high rents asked for the same, moreover, caused the Negroes to locate themselves within restricted bounds of habitation which resulted in a great deal of overcrowding among them. There were found numerous cases in which there were too many persons for each room and too many for each bed. Instances in this regard will be cited farther on in this dissertation.

Another effect of the Negro migration was that of increasing the friction between races in certain parts of the North and West. This effect, however, was not as extensive as it was once thought to be; for in many instances Negroes worked and lived peaceably side by side with the whites. Nevertheless, there were found numerous cases in which racial friction operated to bring about strained relations between the two social groups. These manifested themselves in the form of refusals on the part of some employers to hire Negroes, because white laborers objected to working with black men, and in the form of emphatic protests of white residents of certain industrial towns—especially in the steel districts of Pennsylvania—against the bringing in of Negroes to live among them. This neighborhood prejudice existed also in a number of the cities of the North and West, and was, no doubt, the source of much of the trouble between the races.¹¹³ The most bitter form of racial friction occasioned through the migration was that

¹¹² Kingsley, H. M., *The Negro Migration*, Rep. Home Missions Council, Jan., 1919.

¹¹³ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 129.

which grew out of economic rivalry and competition for jobs. This competition was brought about by a policy pursued by Northern employers, the practice of deliberately importing Negro laborers from the South to replace white workers who went on strike. This naturally served to fan the flames of hatred of the white workers against the Negroes, and actual expressions of this were seen in the serious race riots which followed.

An example of a race riot which grew out of this economic competition was that which occurred in Philadelphia, during the early part of 1917.¹¹⁴ There the white workers in a large sugar refinery went on strike, whereupon the owners of the plant attempted to break the strike by the use of Negro laborers. The latter were attacked violently by the displaced white laborers, and the result was a race riot in the course of which one Negro was killed, and several others were wounded. It is said that the whites resented this substitution of Negro labor for theirs, because the former was being used to keep down wages and thus destroy unionism.

Another typical example of such a race riot is that which took place in East St. Louis, Illinois, in July, 1917, during which more than a hundred Negroes were shot or maimed. Many of them were fatally wounded, five thousand of them were driven from their homes, and several hundred thousand dollars worth of property was destroyed. The origin and cause of this little racial war seemed to have been this: In 1916, 4,000 white men employed in the packing plants went on strike and, in retaliation, the employers of these plants brought in Negroes to work in the places of the strikers. When the strike ended, during the following year, Negroes were still retained as employees in these plants, whereas many whites, who struck, were refused their former jobs. The trade unions then realized the power in this vast resource of imported labor, and, therefore, took steps to check it by appealing to the city authorities to restrain employers from

¹¹⁴ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 129-30.

transporting Negroes from the South. In their appeal they threatened to take action themselves if the city officials did not do so. It happened that the latter failed to act, and, therefore, the unionists and their sympathizers, true to their threat, took complete control of the situation and resorted to mob law as a means of solving the problem.¹¹⁵

Besides these preceding cases, other riots occurred, but these were due to causes other than economic competition. One of these, which took place in Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1917, seemed to have been due to natural friction and conflicts between the worst elements of both groups in the community.¹¹⁶ During the same year, Homestead, Pennsylvania, barely escaped a race riot due to ill feeling between the two groups which had been brewing for some time.¹¹⁷ In Newark, New Jersey, there was a race riot in which four men were wounded, probably fatally, while thirty-three others received slight wounds. This outbreak was of such magnitude that 150 police reserves were required to quell it. It has been reported that it was precipitated by a fight which resulted from a dispute over the amount of money wagered in a dice game conducted by men of both races.¹¹⁸ There were riots during the summer of 1919, in Washington, D. C., Chicago, Illinois, and Omaha, Nebraska; but it is difficult to say to what extent the recent exodus was responsible for these outbreaks. It seems highly probable, however, that the great increase in the white population of Washington and in the Negro population in Chicago, respectively, as a result of movements of our population, contributed much towards intensifying the ill feelings already existing between the two groups.

Furthermore, the coming of the Negroes to the North in such large numbers and their employment in trades and industries hitherto closed to them brought to the front the old problem of the Negro and the labor unions. With few

¹¹⁵ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 130-31.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-32.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

¹¹⁸ *New York Times*, Sept. 4, 1917, 7: 1.

exceptions, the Negroes have generally been barred from membership in the unions on account of race prejudice; and this has especially been the case in the North where the unions are oldest and most powerful and influential in labor affairs. Here white union laborers have manifested their prejudice by repeatedly refusing to work with Negro employés. This naturally prevented employers from utilizing Negro labor, and the outcome of this policy was to exclude the Negroes from the better paying positions and to push them almost wholly into those avocations which are unskilled or unsettled.¹¹⁹ The Negroes have thus been forced into positions where generally they must work for less pay than the unionists, and because of this the latter have branded Negro laborers as "scabs," notwithstanding the fact that the doors of the unions were closed to them. Unwilling to bear this stigma, which made them an object of contempt in the eyes of trades unionists, Negro workers made efforts to organize themselves and drew up petitions requesting admission into the unions. These efforts, however, have been again and again made fruitless by the local labor unions which discriminate against men on account of race and color. When this matter has been referred to the national and international councils these latter bodies have held that their constitutions recognize no such discriminations, but at the same time acknowledged their inability to control these local unions. These locals, therefore, have been a great obstacle to the unionization of Negroes.¹²⁰

Evidently this decree of the American Federation of Labor was not obeyed by all its affiliated internationals, because at its next annual meeting, held in Montreal, Canada, June, 1920, the question of Negro admittance to membership in unions figured as a conspicuous part of its proceedings. On this occasion the discussion of this question arose out of allegations made by delegates, mainly Negroes from Northern States, which accused the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks (whose constitution provides for white

¹¹⁹ Bryce, James, *The American Commonwealth*, 1916 ed., p. 549.

¹²⁰ Jones, E. K., *The Negro in Industry*, pp. 2-3.

membership only) of having refused membership to Negro freight handlers, express and station employees. At the same time, demands were made to the effect that the Federation should change this state of affairs. The tense moments of the convention were reached when the Organization Committee, to whom the matter had been referred, submitted a non-concurrence report, taking the position that the Federation had no authority over the constitution of an affiliated union. This report naturally evoked a very heated controversy between the Negro delegates and their white sympathizers and those whites who were opposed to giving Negroes membership in the labor unions. The Federation, however, rejected this report, and for the first time in its history threatened the autonomy of an affiliated union by first demanding, by several motions, that the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks abolish the color line in its constitution or forfeit its charter in the Federation. None of these drastic motions prevailed. Finally, a modified motion, requesting, rather than demanding, this brotherhood to eliminate from its constitution the words "white only" and give the Negro freight handlers, express and station employees full membership, was carried. Following the adoption of this motion, Chairman Duncan spoke thus, "This, I believe, will settle the Negro problem in our organization for all time. Our affiliated unions must now understand that the color line is abolished."¹²¹

This second act of the American Federation of Labor is, indeed, another step forward in its efforts to settle the problem of the Negro and the unions; but that it will settle this problem for all time is very doubtful. Certainly, there are great obstacles in the way of an early solution of it. Chief of all these obstructions is the force of racial prejudice, which has demonstrated again and again that in spite of laws to the contrary it is powerful enough to devise and put into effect plans whereby its desires may be accomplished. Furthermore, when one considers the structure and foundation of the American Federation of Labor he

¹²¹ Hoxie, R. F., *Trade Unionism in the U. S.*, pp. 112-135.

wonders whether it has authority over its affiliated unions sufficient to compel them to abide by its decrees. The American Federation of Labor is a loose federation of national and international unions—a federation of independent unions. Each national or international, though it receives its charter from the federation, is autonomous, free to withdraw from the federation, and it possesses all the machinery necessary for an independent existence. To this end, it is self-governing, having its own constitution which grants it vast powers. Local unions and other subordinate organizations are created by it. By means of charters and constitutional provisions it actually determines membership and membership conditions and privileges, the functions of locals, their officers and duties, the discipline of the members, and the general conduct of the affairs of the local. Thus, while theoretically the local union is the economic unit of unionism, practically the national or international is the unit, for it and not the local is of primal importance in the American Federation of Labor.

On the other hand, the powers of the American Federation of Labor, though very broad and potent, do not seem to have scope and force enough to permit this body to interfere with much effect in the local affairs of the national or international unions, because of the large degree of sovereignty possessed by these organizations. These bodies, therefore, are at liberty to do things which often are detrimental to the best interests of trades unionism. Here, then, it is seen that the great obstructions to Negro membership in the unions are not the locals but rather the national or international unions, because the locals are entirely responsible to the latter bodies, which are in turn accountable to the Federation. The American Federation of Labor is, therefore, confronted with the difficult task of compelling its nationals or internationals which discriminate against Negroes to change their constitutions and grant Negro laborers full membership in their unions. Can it or will it exert sufficient pressure on these organiza-

tions to bring this to pass? Its most potent coercive measure is the revoking of a union's charter, and the question is will it have the courage to employ this weapon to secure economic justice for the Negro, or will it hesitate to do so? By its action at its last annual meeting, when it preferred to request the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks to eliminate racial discrimination from its constitution and give the Negroes membership in its unions, rather than demand it to do so or forfeit its charter, the American Federation of Labor indicated that either it was doubtful of the extent of its authority over its affiliated international unions or that it is as yet unwilling to deal sternly with them.

Despite these difficulties, the Negro laborers are not giving up the fight for their admittance into the unions. In various ways they are still opposing these forces which are barring them from these organizations. In the meantime they are availing themselves of the aid of certain Negro social agencies which have undertaken to supply the Negro workers with that industrial leadership which they lack by being outside the labor unions. These agencies are the Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, and the National Urban League. These bodies function through their respective industrial secretaries in cities of the North and West. These agencies aim to serve the Negro laborers by investigating and cultivating new avenues of employment, to stand as a buffer between them and the white unions and furnish the leadership usually exercised by trades unionism by taking up the Negro's grievances directly with the management. That these objects may be accomplished these organizations have adopted certain methods of procedure. Most of them operate free employment offices through which from several hundred to two thousand laborers are placed per month. The Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh branches of the National Urban League, and the Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Columbus Y. M. C. A. branches render still broader service by studying the demand for

labor and by endeavoring to persuade employers to use Negroes in new capacities. They try also to aid men to make good on the job by appealing to race pride, by holding noon shop-meetings, and by stimulating the companies to cultivate friendly relationship between labor and the management. These bodies, by acting as mediators in labor disputes, moreover, have been successful in averting or settling a number of minor strikes.¹²²

Finally, if by some means the American Federation of Labor should succeed in compelling its affiliated unions to abolish the color line in their respective constitutions and admit the Negro to full membership in their unions, the Negro will be granted a right long denied him, the right of working on terms of equality with the other race, if he can demonstrate his competence to do so. It will give him a chance to enter all of the skilled and therefore better paid trades and the opportunity to be judged on his merits in them. If this barrier of race discrimination is thoroughly broken down, moreover, there will be open to the Negro paths long closed to him, the effect of which cannot fail to elevate to an appreciable degree his status in the industrial world. Then, by enjoyment of this right, the Negro will no longer in effect be excluded from the higher type of occupations and pushed into those commonly regarded as menial and held in disdain.¹²³

¹²² Woofter, T. J., Jr., "The Negro and Industrial Peace," *Survey*, 45: 421, Dec. 18, 1920.

¹²³ *New York Times*, June 16, 1919, 12: 5.

CHAPTER VII

THE EFFECTS OF THE MIGRATION UPON THE MIGRANTS THEMSELVES

We pass on now to the study of the effects of the movement upon the migrants themselves, or to a consideration of the behavior of the Negroes under the existing economic and social conditions in the new environment. This obviously involves an examination into the results of the efforts exerted by the newcomers in order to become adjusted to their new surroundings. In this regard the thing that was primal and most fundamental was the economic interest, or the interest of self-maintenance, which, as has been shown, was the most powerful force operating to draw the Negroes to the North. This interest was satisfied by the admittance of the Negroes in large numbers into lines of work hitherto closed to them; but these were for the most part unskilled occupations. It is estimated that of the thousands of Negroes who moved North about 90 per cent of them were engaged in unskilled work and that the other 10 per cent performed either semi-skilled or skilled labor.¹²⁴ This was especially true of the Negro workers who were employed in the large steel plants in the State of Pennsylvania. In the larger establishments of this sort almost fully 100 per cent of them did common labor, while in some of the smaller plants a few were sometimes found doing labor which required some skill. When employers were asked why this was the case they generally replied in a two-fold manner: first, the Negro migrants were inefficient and unstable; and secondly, the opposition on the part of white laborers to work with Negroes prohibited their employment of them to do skilled work.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, p. 190.

¹²⁵ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 126-27.

What has just been said sums up very briefly the whole situation regarding the efforts of Negroes to maintain themselves in the North. We wish, however, to continue this in a more specific way by making a little survey of the occupations and wages of Negro migrants in a few of the cities of the North and West. Although accurate information in this respect is meagre, yet that which will be given is undoubtedly authoritative, being based on specific studies of the labor and wage conditions of the newcomers in the cities named and which, therefore, may also be regarded as typical of the same conditions in most of the other cities not herein considered. The advanced reports of the Federal census of 1920 contain as yet no information of this sort and there were so many changes between 1918 and 1920 that it is still difficult to describe these conditions accurately.

The occupations and wages of these migrants throw further light on the situation. In Pittsburgh it was found that of 493 migrants who stated their occupations, 95 per cent were engaged in unskilled labor in the steel mills, the building trades, on the railroads, or were acting as servants, porters, janitors, cooks, and cleaners. Of this same number only 4 per cent were employed at what might be called semi-skilled or skilled work such as puddlers, mold-setters, painters, and carpenters. A further study revealed that out of 529 laborers only 59 had been doing skilled work in the South, and that of the rest a very large number had been rural workers.¹²⁶ While most of the workers were engaged in unskilled labor, their wages nevertheless were much in advance of those they had received in the South. These wages were as follows: 62 per cent of the workers received from \$2 to \$3 per day; 28 per cent received from \$3 to \$3.60 per day; and 5 per cent over \$3.60 per day. The other 5 per cent of them received less than \$2 per day, which was the same wage they had worked for before coming North.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Epstein, A., *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, p. 22.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

This same investigation also brought out the fact that many of these migrants were exercising a good deal of economy and thrift. For example, 15 per cent of 162 families had savings, 80 per cent of 139 married men with their families elsewhere were sending money home, and nearly 100, or 46 per cent of 219 single men interviewed were contributing to the support of parents, sisters or other relatives. Most of these contributions amounted each to about \$5 per week. Fifty-two persons were remitting from \$5 to \$10 per week, while seven were sending home over \$10 per week.¹²⁸

In Detroit where Negroes were hired largely by automobile firms or by firms making parts or accessories of automobiles, some interesting conditions were observed. The large majority of those so engaged did unskilled work, whereas only a very small number were found in the skilled or semi-skilled work. Also a very large number of men and women obtained employment as domestic and personal servants. For example, during a period of one year, ending November 15, 1917, one Negro employment office in this city secured jobs for 10,000 Negro workers, both men and women. In addition, the wages paid these laborers were found to be very satisfactory. A careful study of 194 workers showed that their monthly wages ran thus: One received between \$30 and \$39, three between \$40 and \$49, six between \$60 and 69, twenty-nine between \$70 and \$79, and ninety-six between \$80 and \$89, six between \$90 and \$99, and twenty-seven between \$100 and \$119, twenty-one between \$120 and \$129, and four \$140 or more, a month. The other one of this number received a wage of \$6 per day. Hence the prevailing wages of colored male workers in Detroit were from \$70 to about \$119 per month, since the wages of 159 of the 194 interviewed ranged between these two amounts. The prevailing wage for women was \$2 per day.¹²⁹

In 1917 a study was made of the living conditions of

¹²⁸ Epstein, A., *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, p. 24.

¹²⁹ Haynes, G. E., *Negro New-Comers in Detroit, Mich.*, pp. 12-20.

seventy-five families who had moved North to Chicago and who had been in this city one year. The investigation discovered that the heads of these families were employed in stockyards, Pullman service, loading cars, fertilizer plants, railroad shops, cleaning of cars and taxis, junk business, box and dye factories, foundries and hotels, steel mills, as porters, in wrecking companies, in bakeries, and in the making of sacks. Inquiry into the wage conditions of sixty-six of these workers showed that four were earning less than \$12 per week, twenty-two from \$12 to \$14.99 per week; twenty-seven were receiving \$15 per week, and five between \$15 and \$20 per week. Of the remaining number three were ill and five were unemployed.¹³⁰

Shortly after the Negro migration had begun, The Associated Colored Employees of America, with headquarters in New York City, came into existence for the purpose of helping Negro misfits in Northern industries, and also to secure a proper distribution of Negro labor both in the South and in the North. This organization discovered that 2,083 Negro men and women in New York City were engaged in twelve different occupations, but that only one was employed at his calling. The rest of them were rendering menial service as porters, elevator operators, chauffeurs, waiters, common laborers, and so on. The females were employed as chambermaids, waitresses, and as workers in other unskilled occupations. Many of these workers were graduates of Hampton, Tuskegee and other industrial schools of the South, and most of them had been attracted to the North by promises of better wages, better schools and better living conditions than could be obtained in the South. Although no statement was made regarding the wages they were receiving, it is at once obvious that by being in these unskilled positions these migrants were not earning what they would have earned had they been employed at jobs of the higher type.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Leavell, R. H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 22-23.

¹³¹ Ross, J. A., "New Organization Helps Negro Misfits," *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1917, III, 10: 1.

Because of the varied and extensive industrial activities and the great demands for labor, many migrants were attracted to the State of New Jersey, and especially to the city of Newark. It is estimated that 6,000 male and 1,000 female workers were employed in the several industries of this city.¹³² The male laborers were largely engaged in the ammunition plants where they received an average wage of \$2.60 per day.¹³³ They were also employed to a great extent in the unskilled work in chemical plants, transportation, trucking, shipyard work, leather factories, iron molding, foundries, construction and team driving.¹³⁴ The females found employment in toy factories, shirt factories, clothing factories, and glue factories at an average wage of about \$8 per week. In the shell-loading plants and piece-work occupations, however, their wages were much higher. Besides, work was supplied them in tobacco factories, celluloid manufacturing plants, food production, leather-bag making and trunk manufacture, and in assorting cores in foundries.¹³⁵

A survey of the labor and wage conditions among the migrants in the city of Hartford indicated that the males were employed in the factories and foundries and that most of them were doing unskilled work, although here and there a few were doing skilled work. Some had shown, moreover, that they possessed the capacity and energy sufficient to establish enterprises of their own as means of self-maintenance, for there were found among them a first-class restaurant, fine barber shops, first-class shoe shop, six grocery stores and three tailor shops for cleaning, pressing and repairing; and each enterprise was doing a thriving business. The wages of those working in the factories and foundries were \$4 per day. The females, on the other hand, were employed mostly in domestic service, and their

¹³² *The Negro at Work During the War and During Reconstruction*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 89.

¹³³ Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 570-71, Feb. 17, 1917.

¹³⁴ *The Negro at Work During the War and During Reconstruction*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 89.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

average wage was \$9 or \$10 per week. The girls and a few of the women were employed in the department stores as helpers and cleaners at wages ranging from \$7 to \$9 per week. About 250 of them were employed also as tobacco strippers and received wages of from \$10 to \$12 per week. Besides, the working conditions, on the whole, were reported to be very satisfactory.¹³⁸

Most of the Negroes who were employed in the foregoing instances had been former employees in the cotton, tobacco, rice, sugar cane, turpentine and lumber industries of the South. Their coming to the North in search of work suddenly forced them into factories, foundries, ammunition plants, automobile establishments, packing industries, and into various other forms of work which were entirely different from those to which they had been accustomed at home. Attached to these occupations was a set of mores, wholly new to the Negroes, and with which they had, first of all, to make themselves familiar. It goes almost without saying, therefore, that at the beginning the Negroes experienced much difficulty in trying to adjust themselves to these new labor conditions. Among these newcomers, moreover, there were two types of laborers, namely, those who were intelligent, industrious, and thrifty. In this class were many students and men with responsibilities, who had been carefully selected by the labor agents. The second type was composed of men who had been picked up promiscuously and transported to the North. These were for the most part single men and in habits were shiftless and undependable; and in numbers this class far exceeded the former type. It will, therefore, be of interest to know what was the behavior of the Negroes in the various industries in which they were employed.

The performance of the Negroes in this regard is well

¹³⁶ Ross, J. A., "New Organization Helps Negro Misfits," *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1917, III, 10: 1.

¹³⁷ Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 570-71, Feb., 1917.

¹³⁸ Wright, James A., *Letter on Conditions of Negro Migrants in Hartford*, Dec. 1, 1919.

seen in the railroad and steel industries which employed many thousands of them. In these we find that the deportment of the Negro workers was such as to cause a great deal of labor turn-over. This was due largely to the fact that these concerns hired mostly single men who were shiftless and given to wandering from place to place. For example, the Pennsylvania Railroad, in 1917, after a year of importation of thousands of Negroes from the South had less than 2,000 in its employ. The Baltimore and Ohio and New York Central roads, after having done likewise, had less than 1,000 Negroes occupied. Each of these roads experienced a demand for labor and was trying to fill the depleted ranks by further importations from the South. Again, in 1917, the Erie Railroad reported that among 9,000 Negroes brought from the South during a period of six or seven months a full labor turn-over occurred every eleven days. Of this number only the first two thousand remained long enough to work out the transportation that had been furnished them. In most of these cases the Negroes, after reaching the North, remained in the railroad camps only long enough to draw a first pay or until they learned of the opportunity for higher wages in other fields. Sometimes they would not wait even long enough to try the work and quarters after their transportation had been paid, but would start at once for other places.¹³⁹

The steel mills in Pennsylvania, like the railroads, also found it difficult to keep a stable Negro labor force. At the Coatesville Midvale plant it was necessary to bring in 150 new workers each week in order to keep the labor force up to the normal standard. This same plant was compelled to hire from 2,500 to 2,800 men a month to keep a steady force of 5,500 employed, and the turn-over was twice as great among the Negro as among the white workers. The Carnegie steel plant at Youngstown reported that 9,000 or 10,000 Negroes had been hired and that in the meantime it was necessary to keep hiring five men to have every two

¹³⁹ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 122-24.

jobs filled. Even other plants paying the highest wages, moreover, were compelled to hire 200 or more per month in order to keep up a force of 600 men.¹⁴⁰ They would not stay in one place any length of time, but continued to move in search of better wages and accommodations. They could not be persuaded in many cases to wait until pay-day for their earnings, but would not be content if they could not get some of it in advance according to their custom in this regard in the South. In behalf of this they offered the most flimsy pretexts, and often spent this money for very unwholesome things.¹⁴¹

Thus, in 1917, it was concluded that the Negroes were not as yet adapted to the heavy and pace-set work in the steel mills, that they were accustomed to the easy-going plantation and farm work of the South, and that it would take them some time to become adjusted. It seemed that the roar and clangor of the mills made the Negroes a little dazed and confused.

In the city of Detroit the actions of the Negroes in the industries were highly pleasing to some of the employers, whereas to others they were just the reverse. The employers held two lines of adverse criticism against the Negro as a workman. In the first place, they complained that the Negro was too slow; that he did not have the speed which the routine of efficient industry demands; and that he lacked that regularity demanded by the routine of industry day by day. In the second place, the Negro was disinclined to work out-of-doors when the cold weather set in; and, in this respect, he was considered unsatisfactory, because his labor could be depended upon only at certain seasons of the year.¹⁴³

Reports from Newark, New Jersey, likewise showed that the Negroes were having trouble in adjusting themselves to the new conditions. The female migrants manifested

¹⁴⁰ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 124.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹⁴³ Haynes, G. E., *Negro New-Comers in Detroit, Mich.*, pp. 12-20.

an unadaptability to housework, being accustomed to outdoor work on the farms. In factories and freight-yards men and boys when overheated would throw off their outer clothing just as they would in the mild South, with the consequence that they were often attacked by grip and pneumonia. The unaccustomed roads and pavements and long hours of toil caused the migrants to lose many days' work. In fact, outdoor work was attended with so many hardships that the Negroes began to apply only for indoor work. Again, it is said that the fumes in munition factories made many of them temporarily ill, thus necessitating their seeking other work even at lower wages. Explosions in ammunition plants, moreover, threw many out of work and frightened away many more to other occupations which seemed more secure. Thus, these difficulties and hardships attached to their new jobs together with the strangeness of their surroundings caused the Negroes to be very irregular in the performance of their work.¹⁴²

Mr. Eugene K. Jones, the executive secretary of an organization interested in the economic and social welfare of the Negroes in Northern cities, affirms that the testimony of many of the employers was to the effect that the Negroes were rather inexperienced, frequently undependable, and were of a roaming nature, being easily tempted to change their places of employment on account of such inducements as small increases in wages, shorter hours, and easier work. Nevertheless, he takes the position that enough testimony is available to show conclusively that Negro labor in the North, on the whole, was extremely promising. This position is taken on the following grounds: (1) That the Negroes were loyal to their employers; (2) that they took a proprietary interest in their employers' plants; (3) they did not either strike or become easily inflamed against their employers; (4) they were tractable; and (5), above all, most of the Negroes who proved unreliable did so because they had no hope on the job, or because they had been chosen from a group of idle loafers in some Southern city

¹⁴² Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 570, Feb., 1917.

or community where real opportunity for training for the Negro is unknown.¹⁴⁴

Next in importance among the efforts of the migrants to adjust themselves to the Northern environment was that of securing shelter. It has already been shown that the housing of the newcomers developed into a very serious problem and that unusual steps had to be taken in order to meet the emergency. It was indicated also that this unprecedented housing situation gave rise to high rents and caused much congestion or overcrowding among the Negroes. Our aim here, therefore, is simply to expand this further by means of specific examples in order to furnish a more complete picture of this housing problem, especially as it concerned the migrants themselves.

According to a report on housing conditions in Newark, New Jersey, we are informed that old dilapidated buildings, long closed as undesirable for habitation, were opened and rented to Negroes. These houses were rented out as housekeeping apartments regardless of the fact that there were no facilities for such purposes. Kitchen ranges, lavatories, baths, and toilets were either altogether absent or inadequate. In a majority of these houses no heat facilities were supplied, and the consequence was that whole families were accustomed to crowd around a small kerosene stove in stuffy rooms with no ventilation, where all the housekeeping was done, and where frequently the whole family slept together to keep warm. Furthermore, a study of fifty-three families, consisting of three hundred persons—one hundred and sixty-six of whom were adults, and one hundred and thirty-four children—showed that all were crowded into unsanitary, dark quarters averaging 4½ persons per room. These families paid a total rent of \$415.50, an average of \$7.86 per family for these very poor quarters in the worst sections of the city.¹⁴⁵

As to housing conditions in Pittsburgh, it is reported that of four hundred and sixty-five migrants interviewed,

¹⁴⁴ *The Negro in Industry*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 570-71, Feb., 1917.

35 per cent lived in tenement houses, 50 per cent in rooming houses, about 12 per cent in camps and churches, and only 2.5 per cent in what may be called single private family residences.¹⁴⁶ It was further shown that of 157 families investigated to ascertain the number of rooms per family, 77, or 49 per cent, lived in one room each, 33, or 21 per cent, lived in two-room apartments and only 47 families, or 30 per cent, lived in apartments of three or more rooms each.¹⁴⁷ It was discovered, moreover, that sleeping quarters were not only in bed-rooms, but also in attics, basements, dining-rooms, and kitchens. In many cases the houses in which rooms were located were dilapidated dwellings with the paper torn off, the plaster sagging from the naked lath, windows broken, ceiling low and damp, and the whole room dark, stuffy and unsanitary. In a great number of cases, also, the houses had very poor water facilities and filthy toilet conditions, because of the total absence of sewerage connections. In spite of these conditions, however, rent charges for these quarters were comparatively high.¹⁴⁸ "As to housing conditions among the single men in this city, it was discovered that only 22 out of more than three hundred of them had individual bed-rooms. Twenty-five per cent of these lived four in a room, and twenty-five per cent lived in rooms used by more than four people. Thirty-seven per cent of them, moreover, slept in separate beds, 50 per cent slept two in a bed, and 13 per cent slept three or more in a bed."¹⁴⁹

Still further, when the designated Negro quarters in Pittsburgh became congested, there grew up new colonies in various places elsewhere.¹⁵⁰ In many instances the houses in these colonies were those which had been abandoned by foreign whites at the outbreak of the European War. Some of these structures had been formerly con-

¹⁴⁶ Epstein, A., *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

demned by the City Bureau of Sanitation, but were opened again to accommodate the migrants from the South. For these inadequate dwelling places Negro occupants were compelled to pay comparatively high rents, which ranged from \$10 to upwards of \$25 per month.

An investigation made in Cleveland in 1917 revealed the fact that Negroes were living in cramped unsanitary quarters two or three families per suite, and that in this regard there was very little relief in sight. Rents had increased far out of proportion, ranging from 50 per cent to 75 per cent higher for Negro than for white tenants. There were instances in which rents had jumped from \$25 to \$45, from \$16 to \$35 and the like.¹⁵¹ An examination into conditions of housing in Detroit indicated that a majority of the houses were in very bad repair, many of them being actual shanties. Less than one-half of these houses were equipped with bath-rooms or inside toilets. Rents were also exceedingly high. The average rent a room of houses occupied by Negroes was \$5.90, whereas the average rent a room for the city at large was only \$4.25. The prevailing rent a Negro family ranged between \$20 and \$44 per month. It was estimated that the increase in rent of houses occupied by Negroes during eighteen months was all the way from 50 per cent to 350 per cent.¹⁵²

A study of 407 families in Detroit, moreover, showed that 209 of them kept lodgers as a means of procuring money to pay the high rents. One hundred of these kept no lodgers; the other 98 were doubtful or unknown. The prevalent size of each family was from two to four persons, exclusive of lodgers; and 146 families were found living each in two or more rooms. Thus when the size of the families, consisting each of two or three persons, including lodgers, and the number of rooms occupied per family were considered, it was found that there was much overcrowd-

¹⁵¹ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 149.

¹⁵² Haynes, G. E., *Negro New-Comers in Detroit, Mich.*, pp. 25-26.

ing, which meant a serious hindrance to healthy and decent family life.¹⁵³

In regard to the housing situation in Chicago, the Secretary of the National Urban League reported that the Negroes were living in a limited area similar to that of the most Negroes in Harlem, New York City. In the former place, the houses occupied by the migrants were the old one-family type, were unsanitary, and in a serious state of disrepair. Two years previous to the exodus 300 or more of these houses were vacant; but during the migration of the Negroes they all became occupied, many of them having been converted so as to house two or more families. The report further states that the Negro newcomers had pushed over into the white residential section and were occupying houses, vacated by the whites, at an increase of 20 per cent or more in rent. No new houses were being built, in spite of the serious demand for them. The result of this, therefore, was further excessive increases in rental rates, which greatly enhanced the tendency to overcrowd.¹⁵⁴

Finally, we are informed that the housing conditions among Negro migrants in Hartford were very poor. These people were for the most part settled on the east side of the city and lived in tenements formerly used by the foreigners. These dwellings were without modern conveniences and comforts, and were, therefore, very unsanitary. Some of the migrants, however, were more fortunately situated; but were paying exceedingly high rents. The rents averaged from \$20 and \$25 for three rooms to \$30 for four or five rooms. These high rents caused the Negroes to overcrowd in order to be able to pay the same. The owners of these houses, moreover, took advantage of the tenants by doing very little repairing; sometimes just enough to comply with the law.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Haynes, G. E., *Negro New-Comers in Detroit, Mich.*, pp. 23, 26.

¹⁵⁴ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 149.

¹⁵⁵ Wright, J. A., *Letter on Conditions Among Negro Migrants in Hartford*, December, 1919.

CHAPTER VIII

DEPENDENTS AND DELINQUENTS

Another way in which the migration affected the Negroes may be seen in a brief study of their health in the North. To any people moving into new surroundings health is an extremely important concern, because on it largely depends their success in adjusting themselves to the new situations, especially if hard daily toil is their sole means of subsistence. As regards the health of the Negro migrants in the North it is reported that from the start they became, to a great extent, victims of disease. Such a consequence, however, was inevitable because of the sudden change of the Negroes from the comparatively mild climate of the South to the severe climate of the North, their inadequate clothing for the cold weather of this section, the hardships of the unrelenting toil, and the congested and unsanitary living conditions, in the Northern cities and industrial centers. These forces all operated heavily against the bodies of the Negroes and thus rendered them susceptible to pneumonia, bronchitis, tuberculosis, and other deadly maladies. The following studies of health conditions among Negroes in a few Northern cities will demonstrate the extent to which the newcomers were menaced by disease.

According to accounts given by Mr. Abraham Epstein, the health problem of the Negro migrants in Pittsburgh was a serious concern. An investigation into the causes of Negro mortality, based on comparison between a seven-month period in 1915 and a like period in 1917, showed that pneumonia cases during the latter year had increased 200 per cent over those of the former year. The same period in 1917 indicated also a marked increase in acute bronchitis and meningitis, and almost twice as many deaths from heart disease. The seven-month period in 1917, when the

migration was in operation, registered, moreover, a total Negro death rate of 527, whereas the same period in 1915, before the movement began, showed a death list of only 295. During the first seven months of 1917, furthermore, the death rate among Negroes in this city was 48 per cent greater than the birth rate. In other words, while in the general city population the number of deaths was 30 per cent less than the number of births, the number of deaths among the Negroes greatly exceeded the diminished number of births; "thus for every one hundred persons born in Pittsburgh in 1917, there were 70 deaths, whereas among the Negro population for every one hundred children born, one hundred and forty-eight died."¹⁵⁶

The report of the Health Department of Newark stated that during the month of December, 1917, there were 975 cases of diseases, and that this number was 287 in excess of the number of cases of sickness reported during the preceding month. These cases were largely bronchial pneumonia, and the deaths resulting from this malady numbered ninety-four. The report attributed the cause of this increase in pneumonia to the severe weather and to the increasing number of Negro laborers from the South, who, unaccustomed to the harsh climate of the North, easily became victims to this disease.¹⁵⁷ In Philadelphia, in the early spring of 1917, the lack of housing accommodations for the Negro influx caused women and children to be stranded in railroad stations overnight; and this soon brought on a public health problem. As was the case in Newark, in this place, too, there was an increase in pneumonia cases due to the sudden rush of Negroes to the North before the cold period was passed.¹⁵⁸

The health conditions were so serious in Cincinnati that the city health officer suggested the establishment of a community health center in order to improve the health of the Negroes. He pointed out that their general death rate was

¹⁵⁶ Epstein, A., *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, pp. 56-59.

¹⁵⁷ Pendleton, H. B., *Survey*, 37: 571, Feb. 17, 1917.

¹⁵⁸ *Survey*, 38: 28, April 7, 1917.

about double that of the whites, their pneumonia rates more than three times as high, and their syphilis rate more than five times as high as the whites. In proportion to the population, he affirmed also that three times as many Negro children died before birth as whites, and that three times as many of the babies born alive died before their first birthday anniversary; and that the excess in deaths of Negroes from preventable causes alone was so great that it accounts for more than one point in the general death rate of the city.¹⁵⁹

This rush of the Negroes to the North, moreover, was accompanied by smallpox and venereal diseases. Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, for example, faced a danger of epidemic from the former and were compelled to undertake wholesale vaccination of laborers in camps and mills. In one year the city of Cleveland also reported 330 cases of this malady. As to venereal diseases these became so rife that some industries adopted the physical examination system as a part of application for work. One large sugar refinery found after three weeks of this experiment that three in every ten Negro applicants had to be rejected because of syphilis or gonorrhea. An examination of 800 Negroes at a large railroad camp showed that 70 per cent of them were infected with tuberculosis, syphilis, or gonorrhea, and that nearly 80 per cent of the total were infected with the latter disease. This, however, was the case for the most part only among the shiftless, the casuals and floaters, for the examinations of the better type of Negroes showed that the percentage of those affected by those diseases was exceedingly small.

The recent movement brought to the cities of the North a multitude of ignorant Negroes mostly from the farms and plantations of the South, where opportunities for education are almost unknown. To the majority of them city life was an entirely new thing, and especially strange to them was the extremely complex life of the large cities of

¹⁵⁹ *Survey*, 42: 579, July 19, 1917.

the North. Theirs, therefore, was an extremely difficult task to adapt themselves to the mores of these places, and in their efforts to do so, it is very obvious that they could not avoid committing errors. Furthermore, there were among these migrants many who, having been freed from the influence of the strict moral and religious checks of the southern communities, lost complete control of themselves, and were thus led into the committing of criminal acts. These circumstances, however, do not warrant the conclusion that with the coming of the Negroes to the North there arose a wave of crime of various kinds. This was not at all the case. The truth of the matter is that there was an increase in certain cities in both minor and major offenses committed by Negroes, but in this regard the increase in minor offenses was far greater than that in major offenses.

What has just been said is well illustrated by the results of an investigation of Negro crime in Pittsburgh. This was done by comparing the police court records for a period of seven months during 1916-17 with those for the same period during 1914-15, before the migration occurred. This comparison showed that the arrests of Negroes for petty offenses during the former period greatly exceeded those of the latter. During 1914-15 the total number of arrests was 1,681, whereas during 1916-17 the total number was 2,998. There was also a disproportionate increase in arrests for such offenses as suspicious characters, disorderly conduct, drunkenness, keeping and visiting disorderly houses, and violations of city ordinances. Increase in arrests for major offenses was very small. In 1914-15 the number of Negroes arrested for grave offenses was 93, while the number arrested for same in 1916-17 was only 94.¹⁶⁰

The report on Negro crime and delinquency in the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, showed that the Negro population had served more than to double the number of prisoners of color during a period of one year ending 1917. During the spring and summer of that year more than half

¹⁶⁰ Epstein, A., *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, pp. 47-48.

the average number of inmates of the county jail, 200 in all, had been Negroes, although the Negro population of the county was estimated to be about 10 per cent of the total population. Most of the Negroes had been sentenced to serve short terms for stabbing, carrying deadly weapons, or for fighting.¹⁶¹ Likewise, in Steelton, Pennsylvania, there was much disturbance among the Negroes which manifested itself in the form of fighting and cutting one another. From the first there had been a general carrying of weapons, promiscuous shooting, and dangers of trouble with the white population. Many arrests of Negroes were reported to have been made on the especial charges of drunkenness, gambling and disorderly conduct.¹⁶² The Census of 1920 shows, however, that very few Negroes remained in Harrisburg during this preceding decade as the increase was only 721 or 15.9 per cent.

In Cleveland, Ohio, it was found that the Negro population of the jail had increased from 13 per cent of the total jail population in September, 1916, to 87 per cent in September, 1917. During the month of August of the latter year the Negro population of the jail was 60 per cent of the total jail population. The superintendent of prisons, however, expressed the belief that these Negroes were not of the criminal type, and affirmed that they had been sent to jail for such minor offenses as loafing on street corners, drunkenness, and as suspicious characters. He declared, further, that in many instances, because they were inadequately housed, deprived of opportunities for decent recreation, poorly clad, and often hatless on the streets, Negroes were summarily picked up by the police and sent to prison on the mere charge of suspicion.¹⁶³ This accounts for much of the so-called "Negro crime" in the United States.

Without further investigation, and relying solely on the

¹⁶¹ Tyson, F. D., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 141.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 142.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

facts already presented concerning conditions among the migrants in the North, one would, no doubt, at once suppose that a great many Negroes at first failed in the struggle, fell by the wayside, and finally became public charges. Strange as it may seem to relate, however, the contrary was rather the case. Few, indeed, were those among the migrants who became so overwhelmed by poverty as to necessitate their calling for public aid. The only account of Negroes appealing for help is that given by the Society for Organizing Charity in the city of Philadelphia. In this statement we are informed that during one year, ending early in 1917, this society received twenty-eight applications from Negro families who had recently come from the South. This same report states also that the Juvenile Court had received relatively few applications; that the Children's Bureau had not removed any children from newly arrived families; and that the House of Detention had handled only twenty-eight children arrested on one charge or another.¹⁶⁴

This surprisingly small number of Negroes who became public charges must not, however, convey the impression that the migrants were altogether self-supporting. Numerous instances could be cited in which it would be shown that many of the older Negro residents of the North came to the rescue of stranded migrants from the South. Churches and missions did much to help the newcomers to settle themselves in the new environment. When the Negroes began to come in very large numbers, moreover, and when the public realized the many obstacles which were in the way of their adjustment, numerous uplift organizations or counter-selective agencies sprang up, having as their specific function the assisting of the migrants to adapt themselves to the new conditions. Foremost among these was the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes. This organization, however, had been in existence for several years, and had been making itself interested in

¹⁶⁴ Bell, J. B., *Proc. Nat. Conf. Soc. Work.*, pp. 502-03, June, 1917.

the welfare of Negro migrants who were flocking to the cities of the North and West before the recent Negro movement. When this exodus was in full operation, this organization greatly expanded its work by establishing branches in most of the cities where the migrants were located. In order to perform its work more effectively it adopted a program which was executed in most of these cities. The program was (1) the establishment of an employment bureau to secure jobs for all newcomers who had no promise of any before their arrival; (2) the opening of a bureau to locate suitable houses at reasonable rates for the migrants; (3) the organization of a department to provide various kinds of wholesome recreation for the newcomers; (4) the maintenance of a department to aid in suppressing and preventing delinquency and crime among the Negro migrants; and (5) the putting forth of systematic efforts to help the Negroes to become industrially efficient. Thus, it can readily be seen that this organization and the smaller uplift agencies played a large part in the adjustment of the Negroes to the Northern environment; and it is no doubt due largely to their efforts that so very few of the migrants became objects of public charity.

Very recent inquiries, however, show that in certain centers large numbers of the Negro migrants are in distress and are, therefore, compelled to seek public relief. These are single men and in many cases men with families who have been deprived of work because of the great industrial depression now in existence for nearly a year. They are moving from the industrial centers where they were formerly employed into the larger cities either in search of work or on their way back to their homes in the South. Usually, in these places they become stranded and are thus forced to seek aid. Conditions due to the influx of Negro families into the city of Pittsburgh are described by Mr. Charles C. Cooper, head of the Kingsley House, as follows: "The great number of idle colored men and women in any part of the great cities is difficult to estimate; there is no method

of computing those who have come into the city after being laid off in surrounding territory. During some twelve days in January, 1921, 2,100 colored men, who had come from surrounding districts, and none of whom had been working in Pittsburgh, applied at the little Providence Rescue Mission in Pittsburgh for assistance and work. In one week 1,027 applied to the Urban League of this City for work, and 8 received it." He states, further, that the usual uplift or philanthropic agencies were overburdened in their efforts to help these unfortunates. Two prominent Negro churches volunteered their services and rendered valuable assistance to the regular relief organizations in the matter of feeding and housing these migrants. The situation, moreover, was all the more aggravated because of the attitude of the police department toward these newcomers and the acute housing conditions. With its usual lack of understanding, it permitted the police officers to arrest hundreds of these Negroes, many of whom were sent to the workhouse. On account of the scarcity of dwelling places rents were very high, and even where money was available for the purpose, the purchasing of houses was an impossibility. When a large group of these distressed men were asked if they were going to return to the South on account of their misfortunes they firmly replied: "Like Hell we are!"¹⁶⁵

A small movement of some unemployed Negroes endeavoring to reach their original homes in the South, however, greatly augmented the number of homeless Negroes in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, during December, 1920. As this city has never made provision to care for homeless men, these wanderers at first received a very cold reception. The workhouse became the lodging-place of a large number of them, because they were arbitrarily arrested by the police, and on the charge of vagrancy were sentenced by the court to this institution for a period of ninety days. Efforts of the State Employment Bureau and the local branch of the Urban League to find jobs for these men were

¹⁶⁵ *Survey*, 45: 752, Feb. 26, 1921, "A New Negro Migration."

of no avail. Finally, through the instrumentality of the Community Council of this city a meeting of representatives of a number of organizations devised a plan of action for the purpose of aiding these homeless men. To supply them with sleeping quarters the Young Men's Christian Association furnished the use of its basement wherein thirty beds with bedding, loaned by the Associated Charities, were placed. Blankets were provided by the Salvation Army Industrial Home. Funds to defray the expenses of a night man and for breakfasts for the men were pledged by the Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The Director of the Board of Public Safety promised the cooperation of the police by requesting the latter to refer homeless men to the Young Men's Christian Association instead of arresting them with the view of having them sent to the workhouse. The Associated Charities agreed to see to it that every man who actually could be taken care of in another community would be given the necessary transportation, and the city promised to assist in meeting this item of expense. In the meantime the State Employment Bureau and the Urban League gave assurance that they would renew their efforts to secure jobs for those in need of work.¹⁶⁶

The extent to which these conditions exist is not yet definitely known; but owing to unemployment there are many more cases of Negroes undergoing hardships such as those to which reference has just been made. Mr. E. K. Jones, the Executive Secretary of the National Urban League, states that in the city of Detroit a very large number of Negroes are unemployed and in consequence have had to appeal to the city for relief. He is of the opinion that proportionally the Negroes are receiving more aid than any other group, for while they constitute a small percentage of the population of the city, they receive 37 per cent of the total relief given. In Chicago and its vicinity, owing to decreased production, not long ago, 70,000 Ne-

¹⁶⁶ Hoyer, R. A., "Migration of Colored Workers," *Survey*, 45: 930, March 26, 1921.

gro laborers agreed to accept a cut in wages rather than lose their jobs. The agreement was that they would accept a 10 per cent reduction in wages for unskilled laborers and a 15 per cent reduction for skilled workers. Mr. Parker, President of the American Unity Labor Union, declared then that there were 100,000 unemployed men in Chicago and its environs.¹⁶⁷ Thus here too a large number of Negroes are undoubtedly undergoing some hardships or are being placed in positions where these will certainly overtake them.

The fact that so many Negroes are out of work and on this account have fallen into poverty raises the question as to whether their unemployment is due to a general policy of employers to deprive Negroes of work simply because of their color. It is known that during this industrial depression production is exceedingly small and that correspondingly there is an infinitely small demand for the very large available supply of labor. The result is that there is an almost universal state of unemployment which presumably affects all groups alike. However, Mr. Charles C. Cooper, head of the Kingsley House in Pittsburgh, does not think that this is the case, for he is of the opinion that discrimination has been made against Negro workers. He holds that unskilled Negroes, the latest to be employed in industrial plants, have been among the first to be discharged and that only in exceptional instances is this untrue. These exceptions exist where the percentage of Negroes discharged is no larger than that of white workers because of the efforts of Negro social workers who were employed to act as spokesmen for the Negro laborers.¹⁶⁸ Opposed to this is the view of the Executive Secretary of the National Urban League. He does not believe that the percentage of Negroes discharged from work is larger than that of whites. In many plants, where Negroes have made good, when the necessity of cutting down the labor force arose, the proportion of Negroes who were dropped was no

¹⁶⁷ *New York Times*, Dec. 12, 1920, 14: 1.

¹⁶⁸ *Survey*, 45: 752, Feb. 26, 1921.

greater than that of any other group. In fact, in a few cases, employers have actually retained, proportionally, more Negro than white laborers. Be that as it may, the fact, nevertheless, is that unemployment is largely responsible for the distressed conditions of many of the Negro migrants; and the hope is that when this industrial crisis is passed and they are again given the opportunity to work, they will lift themselves once more to the level of self-help and independence.

In any migration of peoples in modern times there are usually those who either intend to remain in the new locality temporarily or who, because of the least dissatisfaction with conditions, are willing to return home at the earliest possible time. This gives rise to an outflow as well as an inflow of migrants. Perhaps the immigration from Europe to this country may illustrate this. For several years previous to the Great War, while thousands of immigrants arrived in this country, on the one hand, on the other, thousands departed for their respective native lands.¹⁷⁰ To some extent this principle likewise applies to this intra-State movement of the Negro population. From our study of conditions among the migrants in the North it is obvious that many of them found conditions very different from what they had been represented to be by labor agents and others. This undoubtedly brought on much dissatisfaction and disappointment, and thus caused many to seek their way back to the South. The number of those acting thus is very uncertain, because no accurate study in this regard has been made. Nevertheless, some have estimated that only about 10 per cent of the total number of those who left the South returned there; others have estimated it as high as 30 per cent.¹⁷¹ Both of these percentages, however, are mere guesses, with the likelihood perhaps of the former being approximately nearer the truth.

¹⁶⁹ Washington, F. B., *Survey*, 38: 333-35, July 14, 1917.

¹⁷⁰ Fairchild, H. P., *Immigration*, pp. 348-52.

¹⁷¹ Dillard, J. H., *Negro Migration in 1916-17*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., p. 11.

The only attempt which has been made to investigate this phase of the movement was that on the part of the Chicago branch of the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes shortly after the Washington and Chicago riots in July, 1919. This study was made mainly to verify the reports to the effect that because of these outbreaks the Negroes had become terrified and were on the move back to the South. This investigation was very limited in that it took cognizance of conditions as they pertained to Chicago only. The method of procedure was the study of Negro arrivals and departures during the week following the riot in that city. The interesting result was that during that period 261 Negroes arrived in the city while 219 departed. Of those leaving 83 gave some southern State as their destination. They were for the most part persons returning from vacations, visiting the South, going on business, or returning to join their families. Only 14 gave the riot as a cause for their leaving the city.¹⁷²

It is reported, moreover, that the South, still feeling the effects of migration in the form of a serious labor shortage in its main industries, has been trying to induce the Negroes to return. As a means of accomplishing this it resorted to a scheme of using certain newspapers in the North to make persuasive appeals to the Negroes. In these the South's needs were made known, its kind treatment of Negroes was extolled, its opportunities were enumerated, and its growing change of heart on the question of race relations was affirmed. After rumor went broadcast that after the Washington and Chicago riots the Negroes, in terror, were leaving the North, moreover, more positive efforts were made, especially on the part of two Southern States, to obtain Negro laborers. These took the form of sending agents to the North to solicit labor and of empowering them to offer the Negroes free transportation and to make them promises of increased wages and better living conditions. These inducements, however, were ineffective

¹⁷² Hill, T. A., *Survey*, 43: 183-85, Nov. 29, 1919.

because the Negroes doubted the sincerity of the Southern agents. Indeed, they were inclined all the more to be skeptical, for in the meantime news had reached them from various parts of the South to the effect that, except school conditions, things have not at all changed for the better; that, in many instances on the contrary, since the Great War living conditions of Negroes have become worse and that from a few places a small stream of Negroes was still moving northward.¹⁷³ The Federal census of 1920 justifies us, furthermore, in saying that for the most part the Negro migrants are satisfied with conditions in the North and are inclined to remain there; and that the number of those returning or who have returned to the South is, in comparison to the great number of those who came North, infinitely small.

¹⁷³ Hill, T. A., *Survey*, 43: 183-85, Nov. 29, 1919.

CHAPTER IX

THE STATISTICS OF THE MIGRATION

The apparent effect of the migration in the light of the advanced reports of the census of 1920 has been the movement of the Negro population from the southern cities to northern industrial centers, while there was going on at the same time a movement of the rural Negro population from the rural districts in the South into the thus depleted southern cities to take the places of those migrating to the North. Statistics show, therefore, a small increase or stability in the cities of the South, whereas the Negro population of the State increased less, remained about the same, or decidedly decreased.

Delaware, for example, although a southern State, economically connected with the North, suffered a decrease in its population, having lost during the decade 846 Negroes, or 2.7 per cent, as against an increase from 1910 to 1920 of 484, or 1.6 per cent. Delaware had 492,614 whites and 30,341 Negroes in 1920. Wilmington, however, had 99,381 whites and 10,751 Negroes, showing an increase in the white population of 26.9 per cent and in Negro population of 18.4 per cent.

In Alabama, out of the total population of 2,248,174 there are 900,652 Negroes, whereas in 1910 the Negroes numbered 908,282, showing a decrease in numbers of 8,282, or a decrease of eight-tenths of one per cent. In 47 of the 60 counties there was also a decrease in its number of Negroes. Statistics further show that this decrease in the Negro population was largely among the males and accounts for the change in the sex ratio of the total population of Alabama. The white population during this decade increased by 17.8 per cent. Yet the cities of Alabama did not thus fare. In Birmingham the increase in the white

population during the decade between 1910 and 1920 was 28,193, or 35.1 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 17,912, or 34.2 per cent. In Mobile the white population increased during the same period 8,132, or 28.3 per cent, whereas the Negro population increased 1,130, or 5 per cent, as compared with an increase of 5,718, or 33.5 per cent, from 1900 to 1910. In Montgomery the increase in the white population was 4,828, or 25.7 per cent, while the Negro population increased 504, or 2.6 per cent.

In 1920 the population of the State of Mississippi included 853,962 whites and 935,184 Negroes. In 1910 there were 786,111 whites and 1,009,487 Negroes. The white population increased 8.6 per cent as compared with 22.6 per cent for the previous decade, while the Negro population showed a decrease of 7.4 per cent as against an increase of 11.2 per cent during the preceding decade. The proportion of Negroes in the total population declined from 56.2 per cent in 1910 to 52 per cent in 1920. In most counties of the State the percentage of Negroes decreased and in 68 of the 82 counties there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes.

The population of the State of Louisiana, according to the last census, is 61 per cent white and 38.9 per cent Negro. In 1910 the percentage of Negroes was 43.1 per cent. The Negro population, which was 713,874 in 1910, decreased to 700,257 in 1920, a decrease of 1.9 per cent. The white population during the same period increased from 941,086 to 1,096,911, or 16.5 per cent. In most of the parishes of the State the percentage of Negroes decreased and in 41 of the 64 parishes there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes. In the city of New Orleans, however, the development was the other way. In 1920 the city had 285,913 whites and 100,918 Negroes. The white population constituted 73.8 per cent of the total in 1920 and 73.6 per cent in 1910 while the Negro population constituted 26.1 per cent of the total in 1920 and 26.3 per cent in 1910. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 36,510, or

14.6 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 11,656, or 13.1 per cent.

Statistics place South Carolina in middle ground. In 1920 there were in that State 818,538 whites and 864,719 Negroes. The corresponding figures for 1910 were 679,161 whites and 835,843 Negroes. The rate of increase in the white population was 20.5 per cent as compared with 21.8 per cent for the period from 1900 to 1910. The percentage of increase between 1910 and 1920 in the Negro population was only 3.5 per cent, a rate slightly more than half as great as the corresponding one for the decade from 1900 to 1910, when it was 6.8 per cent. The proportion of Negroes in the total population declined from 55.2 per cent in 1910 to 51.4 per cent in 1920. In the city of Charleston there were 35,617 whites and 32,292 Negroes. The white population constituted 52.4 per cent of the total in 1920 and 47.2 per cent of the total in 1910 and 52.8 per cent in 1900. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 17,853, or 28.3 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 1,236, or 4 per cent.

Some other Southern States did not have the usual increase in the Negro population, but nevertheless did not report a loss in 1910. In 1920 there were found in Maryland 1,204,737 white persons and 244,479 Negroes. The white population increased by 13.4 per cent while the Negro population increased by 5.3 per cent. In almost every county in the State the percentage of Negroes decreased and in 19 of the 24 counties there was also a decrease in the number of the Negroes. In Baltimore, on the other hand, the tendency was the other way. The white population was 625,074 and the Negro population 108,390, whereas in 1910 there were 473,387 whites and 84,749 Negroes. Both the white and Negro populations, therefore, had increased since 1910, that of the whites being 32 per cent as compared with 10 per cent of the previous decade, and that of the Negro being 27.9 per cent as compared with 6.9 per cent of the previous decade.

The population of Virginia was 1,617,909 whites and 690,017 Negroes. In 1910 there were 1,389,809 whites and 671,096 Negroes. The white population increased 16.4 per cent while the Negro population increased only 2.8 per cent. Lynchburg had 21,714 whites and 8,355 Negroes. In 1910 there were 20,023 whites and 9,456 Negroes. The white population showed an increase since 1910 of 1,691, or 8.4 per cent, while the Negro population showed a decrease of 1,111, or 11.7 per cent. In 1920 Norfolk had 72,243 whites and 43,377 Negroes. In 1910 the figures were 42,353 whites and 25,039 Negroes. The increase of the white population since 1910 was 29,890, or 70.6 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 18,338, or 73.2 per cent. In 1920 Portsmouth had a white population of 31,104 and 23,242 Negroes. In 1910 this city had 21,560 whites and 11,617 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 9,544, or 44.3 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 11,625, or 101 per cent. Richmond had 117,565 whites and 54,057 Negroes in 1920. In 1910 the city had 80,879 whites and 46,733 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 36,686, or 45.4 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 7,314, or 15.7 per cent. Roanoke had 41,530 whites and 9,300 Negroes while in 1910 the figures were 26,945 whites and 7,924 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 14,585, or 54.1 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 1,376, or 17.6 per cent.

North Carolina had some increase in its Negro population. The total population of 2,559,123 included 1,783,779 whites and 763,407 Negroes. In 1910 there were 1,500,511 whites and 697,843 Negroes. The increase in the white population was at the rate of 18.9 per cent, while that of the Negro population was 9.4 per cent. In most counties of the State the percentage of Negroes decreased and in 37 of the 100 counties there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes.

In Georgia the total population of the State comprised 2,895,832, having 1,689,114 white persons and 1,206,365 Negroes. The white population increased by 18 per cent and the Negro by 2.5 per cent. Augusta had a white population of 29,894 whites and 22,576 Negroes, showing an increase during the decade of 32 per cent for the white population as compared with an increase of 8.3 per cent during the previous decade, while the Negro population showed an increase of 23.1 per cent as against a decrease of less than 1 per cent from 1900 to 1910. The white population of Macon increased 32.8 per cent, while the Negro population increased 27.2 per cent. In Rome there was an increase of 19 per cent for the white population as compared with 87.1 per cent of the period before but a decrease in the Negro population of 11.5 per cent against an increase of 32.8 per cent from 1900 to 1910. In Savannah while the white population increased 38.5 per cent, the Negro population increased 17.9 per cent. The statistics of the counties of Georgia show that the percentage of Negroes decreased and that in 82 of 155 counties there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes.

The total population of Florida in 1920 was 968,470. 638,153 of these were white and 329,487 were Negroes, whereas corresponding figures for 1910 showed 443,634 whites and 308,669 Negroes. This indicates that the white population increased by 43.8 per cent and the Negro population by 6.7 per cent. Jacksonville then had 50,031 whites and 41,479 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 21,702, or 76.6 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 12,186, or 41.6 per cent. The city of Tampa had a population of 40,057 whites and 11,520 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 11,267, or 39.1 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 2,569, or 28.7 per cent. In almost every county of the State the percentage of Negroes decreased, and in 28 of the 54 counties there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes.

The border States suffered much from the migration. Kentucky, according to the census of 1920, had 2,416,630 persons. Of these 2,180,560 were whites and 235,938 were Negroes. The corresponding figures for 1910 were 2,027,000 whites and 261,656 Negroes. The white population increased 7.5 per cent and the Negro population decreased 9.8 per cent. There was a decrease in the number of Negroes in 104 of the 120 counties. The city of Covington, however, showed that while the white population was increasing 7.4 per cent, that of the Negro increased 4.9 per cent in contradistinction to what took place in the State as a whole. In Louisville the increase of the white population since 1910 was lower than that for the preceding decade, and the Negro population increased only one-tenth of one per cent during that period, having been 40,522 in 1910 and 40,118 in 1920.

Tennessee belongs to the declining class so far as the Negro population is concerned. In 1920 the State had 1,885,993 whites and 451,758 Negroes. The corresponding figures for 1910 were 1,711,432 whites and 473,088 Negroes. The white population increased by 10.2 per cent while the Negro population decreased by 4.5 per cent. In most of the counties of the State the percentage of Negroes decreased and in 75 of the 95 counties there was also a decrease in the number of Negroes. In Chattanooga there were 39,024 whites and 18,856 Negroes. The figures for 1910 were 26,660 whites and 17,942 Negroes. The increase in the white population during the decade was 12,364, or 46.4 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 924, or 5.1 per cent. In Knoxville there was a white population of 66,508 and a Negro population of 11,303. The figures for 1910 were 28,760 whites and 7,638 Negroes. The increase in the white population was at a much higher rate than during the preceding decade, the increase from 1910 to 1920 being 37,802, or 131.7 per cent, as compared with 3,428, or 13.6 per cent, from 1900 to 1910. The increase of the Negro population was

also greater from 1910 to 1920 than from 1900 to 1910, the increase being 3,665, or 48 per cent, from 1910 to 1920 as compared with 279, or 3.8 per cent, from 1900 to 1910.

The population of Memphis included 101,117 whites and 61,173 Negroes. The figures for 1910 were 78,590 whites and 52,441 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was much lower than that for the preceding decade, the increase from 1910 to 1920 being 22,527, or 28.7 per cent, as compared with 26,210, or 50 per cent, from 1900 to 1910. The increase in the Negro population was greater from 1910 to 1920 than from 1900 to 1910, the increase being 8,732, or 16.7 per cent, from 1910 to 1920 as against 2,531, or 51 per cent, from 1900 to 1910. In 1920 Nashville had 82,699 whites and 35,634 Negroes. In 1910 the corresponding numbers were 73,831 whites and 36,523 Negroes. While the increase in the white population since 1910 was lower than that of the preceding decade, there was a decrease in the Negro population from 1910 to 1920, the decrease being 889, or 2.4 per cent, from 1910 to 1920, as against an increase of 6,479, or 21.6 per cent, from 1900 to 1910.

Missouri, however, forming a part of the industrial West, did not follow the fortunes of Kentucky and Tennessee. In 1920 there were in Missouri 3,225,044 whites and 178,241 Negroes, whereas the figures for 1910 were 3,134,932 whites and 157,452 Negroes. During the decade the white population increased by 2.9 per cent. The population of Kansas City was 293,532 whites and 30,706 Negroes. The white population constituted 90.5 per cent of the total population and the Negro 9.5 per cent. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 30.6 per cent, while the corresponding increase of the Negro population was 7,140, or 30.3 per cent. In St. Louis there were 702,764 whites and 69,603 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 60,276, or 9.4 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 25,643, or 58.3 per cent.

The more favorable condition in Missouri obtained throughout the Southwest. In 1920 there were in Oklahoma 1,821,194 white persons and 149,408 Negroes. The corresponding figures for 1910 were 1,144,531 white persons and 137,612 Negroes. During the decade the white population increased by 26.1 per cent, while the Negro population increased only 8.6 per cent. The white population of Oklahoma City was 82,847 and that of the Negroes 8,269. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 25,354, or 44.1 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 1,723, or 26.3 per cent. There were in Okmulgee 13,967 whites and 3,372 Negroes. The white population increased since 1910 11,241, or 412.4 per cent, while the increase in the Negro population during the same period was 1,996, or 145.1 per cent. In Tulsa there were 63,430 whites and 8,442 Negroes. The white population constituted 88 per cent of the total in 1920 and 88.1 per cent in 1910, while the Negro population constituted 11.7 per cent of the total in 1920 and 10.8 per cent in 1910. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 47,212, or 296 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 6,483, or 330.9 per cent.

In Arkansas the situation seemed to be somewhat the same. The total population of that state in 1920 was 1,752,204. Of this number 1,279,757 were whites and 472,220 were Negroes. The white population increased by 13.2 per cent and the Negro population by 6.6 per cent. During this period the city of Little Rock in that State increased its white population to 47,658 and 17,474 Negroes. The increase in the white population during the decade was 16,273, or 51.8 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was only 2,935, or 20.2 per cent. The statistics as to counties show a decrease in a percentage in the Negro population and 43 of 75 counties reported a decrease in numbers.

The white population of Texas in 1920 was 3,918,165 and that of the Negro 741,694. The corresponding figures

for the previous decade were 3,204,848 whites and 690,049 Negroes. During the decade the white population increased by 22.3 per cent while the Negro population increased by only 7.5 per cent. Dallas had a white population of 134,888 and 24,023 Negroes, whereas in 1910 there were 74,043 whites and 18,024 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 60,845, or 82.2 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 5,999, or 33.3 per cent. El Paso had 75,843 whites and 1,373 Negroes. In 1910 the corresponding figures were 37,586 whites and 1,452 Negroes. While the white population showed an increase in 1920 of 38,257, or 101.8 per cent, the Negro population showed a decrease of 121, or 8.3 per cent. Fort Worth had a white population of 90,466 and 15,876 Negroes. The figures for 1910 were 59,960 whites and 13,280 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 30,506, or 50.9 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 2,616, or 19.7 per cent. In Houston there were 104,367 whites and 33,843 Negroes. In 1910 there were 54,832 whites and 23,929 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 49,535, or 90.3 per cent, while the corresponding increase of the Negro population was 9,914, or 41.4 per cent. In San Antonio there were 146,795 whites and 14,355 Negroes. In 1910 there were 85,801 whites and 10,716 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 60,924, or 71.1 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 3,639, or 34 per cent.

West Virginia, economically a part of the North or West rather than of the South, showed tendencies directly opposite to those of that section to which it is historically connected. In 1920 the State had 1,377,235 whites and 86,345 Negroes. The corresponding figures for 1910 were 1,156,817 whites and 64,173 Negroes. The white population increased by 19.1 per cent while the Negro population increased by 34.6 per cent. The city of Huntington had

47,279 whites and 2,890 Negroes, whereas in 1910 the figures were 29,009 whites and 2,140 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 18,270, or 63 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 750, or 35 per cent. Wheeling had 54,579 whites and 1,619 Negroes. In 1910 the figures were 40,433 whites and 1,201 Negroes. The increase in the white population since 1910 was 14,146, or 35 per cent, while the corresponding increase in the Negro population was 418, or 34.8 per cent.

The effect of the migration in the North and West will be interesting also. The census showed a decidedly large increase in the population in the important industrial States just beyond the line of the North and South. In the North and West there were 1,550,754 Negroes, whereas there were only 1,078,336 in 1910, the increase being 472,448, or at the rate of 43.8 per cent. In the extremely northern and north-western portions of the country the Negro population was not affected otherwise than normally. New England had 66,306 Negroes in 1910 and 79,051 in 1920. The increase was 12,745. The increase and the decrease in the Negro population of these States does not mean very much in percentage because of the very small number of Negroes in that section. For example, the increase in the Negro population of Connecticut, the State most affected thereby, was 5,872, which in the form of a percentage would mean 38.7 per cent. The state had only 21,046 Negroes in 1920 as compared with 15,174 in 1910. The Negro population of New Hampshire, moreover, increased from 564 in 1910 to 621 in 1920, meaning an increase of 10.1 per cent. Vermont had only 572 Negroes in 1920 as against 1,621 in 1910, showing thereby a decrease of 64.7 per cent. Rhode Island had 10,056 Negroes in 1920 and 9,529 in 1910. Massachusetts had 45,466 Negroes in 1920 as compared with 38,055 in 1910. While the white population was increasing 14.4 per cent, the Negro population increased 19.5 per cent. Boston had 16,350 Negroes in 1920 and 13,564 in 1910, showing an in-

crease of 20.5 per cent, while the white population was increasing 11.4 per cent. Maine had 1,310 Negroes in 1910 and 1,363 in 1920, showing an increase of 3.9 per cent in the Negro population, while the white population was increasing only 3.5 per cent.

New York increased its Negro population 47.9 per cent. This State had 134,191 Negroes in 1910 and 198,423 in 1920. The migration did not materially affect any cities in the State except New York City, Buffalo and Rochester. The Negro population of New York City increased from 91,709 in 1910 to 153,088 in 1920, an increase of 66.9 per cent. In Buffalo, an industrial center, the Negro population increased 154.8 per cent, that is, from 1,773 in 1910 to 4,517 in 1920. The Negro population of Rochester increased from 879 in 1910 to 1,599 in 1920, an increase of 720, or 81.9 per cent.

In New Jersey there was an increase of 30.5 per cent in the Negro population during this period, that is, from 89,760 Negroes in 1910 to 117,132 in 1920. The cities much affected thereby were Camden, East Orange, Jersey City, Atlantic City, and Newark. The Negro population in Atlantic City increased 11.3 per cent, that is, from 9,834 in 1910 to 10,948 in 1920. That of Camden increased 40.1 per cent, that is, from 6,076 Negroes in 1910 to 8,513 in 1920; that of East Orange 24.6 per cent, that is, from 1,907 Negroes in 1910 to 2,377 in 1920; that of Jersey City 33.3 per cent, that is, from 5,960 Negroes in 1910 to 7,947 in 1920; that of Newark increased 79.5 per cent, that is, from 9,475 in 1910 to 17,010 Negroes in 1920.

The Negro population of Pennsylvania increased 46.7 per cent. This State had 193,919 Negroes in 1910 and 284,568 in 1920, the increase being 46.7 per cent. The cities which were materially affected by the migration were Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Chester. The Negro population of Philadelphia increased from 84,459 in 1910 to 134,098 in 1920, showing an increase of 49,632, or 48.8 per cent. The Negro population of Pittsburgh increased

47.1 per cent, that is, from 25,623 in 1910 to 37,688 in 1920. The Negro population of Harrisburg increased from 4,535 in 1910 to 5,256 in 1920. The Negro population of Chester increased 48.5 per cent, that is, from 4,795 in 1910 to 7,119 in 1920. The Negro population of such cities as Altoona, York, Washington, Harrisburg, Johnstown and Lancaster was considerably increased, in some cases more than doubled; but not sufficiently to make any material change in the complexion of the city.

Ohio had an increase in the Negro population of 67.1 per cent. This State had 111,452 Negroes in 1910 and 186,187 in 1920. The cities much affected thereby were Cincinnati with an increase of 35.6 per cent, that is, from 19,639 in 1910 to 29,636 in 1920; Columbus with an increase of 73.4 per cent, that is, from 12,739 in 1910 to 22,091 in 1920; Dayton with an increase of 43 per cent, that is, from 4,842 in 1910 to 9,029 in 1920. Toledo had an increase of 203.1 per cent, that is, from 1,877 in 1910 to 5,690 in 1920; Youngstown had an increase of 244 per cent, that is, from 1,936 in 1910 to 6,660 in 1920; and Cleveland had the largest percentage of all, showing an increase of 308.1 per cent, that is, from 8,448 in 1910 to 34,374 in 1920.

The Negro population of Indiana increased 34 per cent, that is, from 60,320 in 1910 to 80,810 in 1920. The cities most affected by this migration were Gary with an increase from 383 in 1910 to 5,299 in 1920; Indianapolis with an increase of 59 per cent, that is, from 21,816 in 1910 to 34,690 in 1920, and Terre Haute with an increase of 40.6 per cent, that is, from 2,593 in 1910 to 3,646 in 1920. Fort Wayne was not materially affected. Evansville had 6,400 in 1920, only 134 more than it had in 1910. South Bend had practically no Negroes at first but received 691 during this decade in addition to the 604 which it had in 1910.

The Negro population of Illinois increased 67.1 per cent, that is, from 109,049 in 1910 to 182,274 in 1920. The two urban centers chiefly affected in that State were East St. Louis and Chicago. The Negro population of Chicago in-

creased 148.5 per cent, that is, from 44,103 in 1910 to 109,594 Negroes in 1920. The Negro population of East St. Louis increased from 5,882 in 1910 to 7,433 in 1920, the percentage being 26.5 per cent. The change in the complexion of the population of Peoria, Rockford, and Springfield is not interesting.

Michigan showed an increase in the Negro population of 251 per cent, that is, from 17,115 in 1910 to 60,082 in 1920. Detroit was most affected thereby, its population having increased 623.4 per cent, that is, from 5,751 Negroes in 1910 to 41,532 in 1920.

Kansas showed an increase in its Negro population from 54,030 in 1910 to 57,925 in 1920, or an increase of 7.2 per cent. Kansas City, an urban center of importance influenced by Kansas City, Missouri, was most affected thereby. Its Negro population was increased 55.1 per cent during this period, that is, from 9,285 in 1910 to 14,405 in 1920. The population of Topeka decreased 5.3 per cent, that is, from 4,538 Negroes in 1910 to 4,297 in 1920, while in Wichita there was an increase of 44.2 per cent, that is, from 2,457 in 1910 to 3,543 in 1920.

Iowa showed an increase of only 26.9 per cent in its Negro population, that is, from 14,973 in 1910 to 19,005 in 1920. Nebraska had 7,689 Negroes in 1910 and 13,242 in 1920. Omaha showed an increase in its population of 133 per cent, that is, from 4,426 in 1910 to 10,314 in 1920. Wisconsin increased its Negro population from 2,900 in 1910 to 5,201 in 1920, an increase of 79.3 per cent. Milwaukee received most of these, having 908 Negroes in 1910 and 2,234 in 1920, an increase of 128 per cent.

The statistics of the States of the Far West, such as Idaho, North and South Dakota are not very interesting. North Dakota had a decrease in its Negro population of 24.3 per cent and South Dakota increased its 1.8 per cent. Utah increased its Negro population 26.4 per cent; Idaho 41.3 per cent; Minnesota 24.4 per cent; Nevada decreased 32.6 per cent; and New Mexico increased 252.1 per cent. That of

Colorado decreased from 11,423 in 1910 to 11,318 in 1920, that of Montana decreased from 1,834 in 1910 to 1,658 in 1920; and that of Wyoming decreased from 2,235 in 1910 to 1,375 in 1920. Oregon's Negro population increased 43.7 per cent, that is, from 1,492 in 1910 to 2,144 in 1920. Washington increased its Negro population 13.6 per cent, that is, from 6,058 Negroes in 1910 to 6,883 in 1920. The Negro population increased 79.1 per cent in California, that is, from 21,645 in 1910 to 38,763 in 1920.

CHAPTER X

SOME CONCLUSIONS

If now we put together here much of what we have learned from the study of this movement, we perceive first of all that it was a social phenomenon representing the maladjustment of almost 500,000 Negroes to their present environment and their escape from this situation by flight to another locality. This maladaptation was the result of defeat of the migrants by natural forces operating in the struggle for existence, and of their failure to overcome the powerful economic and social adversities due to racial prejudice in the Southern society. The floods and boll-weevil pests had, in many cases, either destroyed crops, or rendered the raising of them totally impossible, and in consequence had practically destroyed the very means of subsistence of the Negroes. Added to this were numerous economic and social disadvantages in the form of unjust farming conditions, wretchedly low wages, lynchings, segregation, injustice in the courts, poor housing, poor schools, and so on, all of which tended to make life in the home environment more and more unendurable. While these driving forces were at work, there suddenly loomed up in the North a most unusually large demand for labor, and in this the Negroes saw the possibility of gaining access to an environment where conditions of life seemed much more favorable than those in the present surroundings. Consequently, as a means of escaping the pain of maladaptation and of seeking the pleasure which results from proper adjustment to external conditions, the Negroes simply chose the line of least resistance; that is, flight or migration to the North.

In the next place, we see that the migration was merely one of many such movements which have been in progress

for more than fifty years, and that it differs from these only in volume. Its uniqueness, as we said,¹⁷⁴ lies in the fact that it alone brought from the South to the North and West a number of Negroes which exceeds that which resulted from all the combined movements in this direction during a period of forty years. While this is the case, it should not be overlooked, however, that this was due largely to the then existing extraordinary economic and social conditions. At the time of the occurrence of this movement conditions causing the Negroes to desire to leave the South, and opportunities for their employment in Northern industries, were never so favorable and widespread as then. The forces of push and pull, both economic and social, were present and were operating on a scale larger than any hitherto known. It is, therefore, very evident that without these most unusual and favorable conditions this migration either never would have occurred when it did, or if it would have, it would not have acquired such an immense volume.

It has been seen, moreover, that this recent exodus was a sort of spontaneous movement of the masses of the Negro population and not one composed of its leading elements. This fact has been marveled at, because in this migration the rank and file of Negroes, accustomed to being led, showed some initiative by acting of their own accord, and thereby abandoned the old policy of seeking and awaiting the advice of their leaders.¹⁷⁵ While this is true, and is, indeed, a very commendable performance, yet a careful view of the situation will show that it is hardly a phenomenon to be considered a marvelous affair. As we saw in Chapter IV of this dissertation, this movement was largely precipitated and stimulated by the labor agents who were seeking a supply of labor to satisfy the demand of northern industries. The Negroes, then suffering from the pangs of maladaptation, were seeking an avenue of escape, and this was pointed out to them by these agents. The latter offered the

¹⁷⁴ See Chapter III of this Essay.

¹⁷⁵ *Survey*, 38: 227, June 2, 1917; and 38: 428, Aug. 11, 1917.

Negroes free transportation, and promised them higher wages, better working conditions, better social advantages, and on the whole better things than the southern environment could afford them. In many instances, for a time all the Negroes needed to do was to decide to leave the South, and, thereafter, they had very little to worry about until they had reached their destination places. In this whole matter it seems that the Negroes were confronted with what Professor Sumner calls the first task of life, which is the task of living, not thinking. Conditions in the environment had brought to them necessities which had to be satisfied at once. Need then was their experience and was followed immediately by efforts to satisfy it. This was the impelling force.¹⁷⁶ Through the efforts of the northern labor agents the Negroes obtained instruction as to the means whereby this need might be satisfied. They, therefore, were the actual leaders of the movement, and thus rendered it unnecessary for the Negroes to turn to seek and await the counsels of their customary leaders.

While this movement was in operation, futhermore, the opinion of a few was to the effect that this migration would act as a means of so distributing the Negro population throughout the country as to bring on an equalization of the racial problem. This, it was alleged, would be a good thing, first, because it would remove the fear of race domination in the Southern States and thus deprive them of many of their peculiar characteristics which they have developed in the course of their efforts to keep the Negroes in the background; and, secondly, because it would be of benefit to Negroes, in that it would mean for them better education, more wealth, and greater political power.¹⁷⁷ It is evident that had this movement wrought such results it would have been a social occurrence of extraordinary importance, because it would have, perhaps, accomplished much in the way of lessening the tense friction between the two races;

¹⁷⁶ *Folkways*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ Woodson, C. G., *A Century of Negro Migration*, pp. 183-84; *New Rep.*, 7: 214, July 1, 1916.

but it produced no such results. The Census of 1920 shows that the North and West had a very large increase in its Negro population during the preceding decade, the number being 472,448, but the Negro population in the Southern States decreased in only a few and remained almost normal in others while actually increasing in some of these commonwealths. In fact, when we consider the effects of past movements upon the distribution of the Negro population in this country, we are forced to the conclusion that such a dissemination of this population can hardly be accomplished through migration. According to the Federal census of 1910, in 1870 the total Negro population of the United States was 4,880,009. Of this number 4,420,811 lived in the South, and 459,198 lived in the North and West.¹⁷⁸ In 1910, forty years later, this same population was 9,827,763, and of this number 8,749,427 resided in the South, whereas only 1,078,336 dwelled in the North and West.¹⁷⁹ Looking at this distribution of population from the standpoint of percentage estimates, we find that in 1870 90.6 per cent of the Negro population lived in the South, whereas only 9.4 per cent lived in the North and West. In 1910, 89 per cent of the total Negro population of the United States was living in the South, while only 11 per cent was living in the other two sections.¹⁸⁰ In 1870, moreover, the number of Negroes born in the South and living in the North and West was 149,100; in 1910 this number had increased to only 440,534.¹⁸¹ This number, however, was exclusive of that of the migrants who might have died or returned to the South or elsewhere before the taking of the Federal census.

Owing to a number of small and unimportant movements, and this great movement of 1916-18, the Federal census of 1920 shows, on the one hand, a decrease in the percentage of the total Negro population living in some of the South-

¹⁷⁸ *Negro Population in the U. S., 1790-1915*, p. 33.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

ern States and, on the other, a considerable increase both in the number of Negroes born in the South and living in the North and West, and in the percentage of the total Negro population of the United States residing in these two sections. The point here, however, is that notwithstanding the numerous movements of Negroes from the South since their emancipation, in 1910 nearly nine-tenths of the total Negro population of this country was still living in that section, whereas only a little more than ten per cent was residing in the North and West. This shows that the Negroes in proportion to their numbers are leaving the South very slowly, and that the tendency is for the greater bulk of the Negro population of the United States to remain in that section. This, therefore, seems to preclude the notion of a general dissemination of the Negro population in the United States, unless those conditions which gave rise to the recent large Negro exodus should repeat themselves in such rapid successions as to cause numerous similar movements; but the occurrence of such phenomena, while not altogether impossible, is, to say the least, very highly improbable.

During this movement also migration was suggested as a weapon which the Negroes might use against the South. In this regard the opinion was expressed that since the Negroes cannot defend themselves by the ballot or armed revolt they have in their possession an effective weapon in the form of migration, because it can be used quietly, without open threats, and with telling results. All they need do, when conditions in the South become intolerable, is to move away, provided, however, there are economic opportunities for them in the North. By so doing they will render the South decidedly hard up for labor, and thus force it to make concessions to them or face economic stagnation.¹⁸² While there might be a possibility of putting this suggestion into effect, yet a little inquiry into the nature of migration will show that its use as an economic

¹⁸² *New Republic*, 7: 214, July 1, 1916.

weapon is greatly limited. For the occurrence of a migration, as has been seen, there must always be both a repellent cause and an attractive cause. These causes, however, do not always occur simultaneously, for while the repellent or drawing cause may be existent, the attractive or beckoning cause may be non-existent and vice versa. Hence, in either case there will be no migration, because it is the tendency of man to prefer to remain in the environment to which he has become accustomed, even under most adverse conditions, or to leave it only when he feels certain that another environment offers him advantages superior to those afforded him by his home surroundings.

According to this principle, then, there might occur repeated instances in which conditions in the South may become very distressing, but unattended by signs of better things in the North. This would, no doubt, result in compelling the Negroes, for the most part, to remain where they are. In a word, a migration, in the true sense of the word, is not a phenomenon brought about by the mere whims or fancies of the individuals or groups participating, but is rather brought into being by a sort of rational response to certain economic and social laws. A movement engendered otherwise is almost certain to bring disaster to the migrants, as was the case in the Negro exodus to Kansas in 1879.¹⁸³ The occasion for a Negro migration of sufficient volume to affect the industries of the South, moreover, as did this recent one, might require such a long time for its occurrence as to render the force of the migration as a weapon almost nihil. On account of the peculiar position in which the Negroes find themselves placed, therefore, it might be well if they had in their possession some economic instrument by which they might peaceably force concessions from the South, and thereby remove many of the obstacles in the way of their progress; for it is hardly possible that they will accomplish this through the agency of migration.

¹⁸³ See Chapter III of this Essay.

Another thing in regard to this movement is that it has undoubtedly taught the South a few lessons. First of all, it must have brought home the fact that the Negroes, to a very large extent, are dissatisfied with conditions in the South; that they resent the economic and social injustices done to them; that they are not wholly anchored to this section; and that large numbers are ready to leave whenever there are signs of favorable opportunities for them in the North and West. As never before, perhaps, moreover, the South has been made to realize the economic value of the Negroes. It has been brought to see the valuable asset it possesses in having at hand this almost illimitable supply of labor so well adapted to its climate and industries, and that there are possibilities of its losing it to such an extent as to endanger very seriously its economic interests. The migration, moreover, has, on the whole, demonstrated to a large part of the better elements of the South that the Negro has not been getting a square deal; that in dealing with him rough methods will not work; and that if the South would have the Negro remain there, "the conditions under which he lives must be kindlier, the collective attitude of the white people toward him friendlier, and that equal opportunities with the whites for his prosperity, enjoyment of life, and the education of his children, must be assured him, not grudgingly, but gladly and abundantly."¹⁸⁴ In a word, the realization is that in order to allay his discontent with conditions in the South, the Negro must in every way be given a man's chance.

The migration likewise is not without its lessons to the Negroes themselves. In the first place, it must be evident to many that moving from the South to the North is no mere trifling affair, but rather a matter of serious concern. It causes the migrants to change suddenly from a mild climate, comparatively easy and slow-moving types of occupations, and relatively simple living conditions to a climate that is for the most part severe, to hard, relentless,

¹⁸⁴ *New York Times*, Jan. 21, 1918, 10: 4.

and pace-set work of various kinds, and to very complex living conditions. This sudden shift from the old to the new locality brings many hardships and misfortunes to the migrants, because it means for them the putting forth of strenuous efforts for a long period of time in order to make themselves fit for the new occupations, crowded and unsanitary conditions of living, grave problems of health, and much delinquency and crime among them. It brings, also, additional burdens upon the communities of the North and West, because they are compelled to expend much energy, time and money in creating and maintaining social agencies for the purpose of helping the newcomers to adjust themselves to the new surroundings. It means, again, the increasing of the friction between the two races which frequently results in horrible race riots like those of Chicago and East St. Louis.

In the next place, the migration must have made it obvious to the Negroes that the North's interest in them is predominantly economic. The North wants the Negro, but to a limited extent only. It is glad to have him, but only so far as he can be of use to it in its industries. It is not at all disposed to invite and welcome him within its confines merely for the sake of enabling him to escape his unfortunate situation in the South. This is seen, to some extent, in the somewhat changed attitude on the part of certain employers toward Negro labor. It is reported that with the signing of the Armistice the barriers of race were again set up in industry. During the war Negro workers were used widely in the place of white workers to turn out war supplies, but with the ending of hostilities, making these products unnecessary, this policy came to an end. Employers are less willing now to hire Negroes than before, race riots are making it difficult for Negroes to get jobs, and firms which never employed Negro workers are loath to begin the experiment at this time.¹⁸⁵

This movement perhaps has furthermore indicated

¹⁸⁵ *Survey*, 42: 900, Sept. 27, 1919.

very clearly another factor besides racial prejudice which has been a great obstacle in the way of the Negroes' admission into northern industries, and that with its removal there is a possibility of the Negroes becoming greater participants in them. This is foreign labor. This factor has worked along with that of racial antipathy, and has been the latter's most efficient ally in rendering insecure the interests of Negro labor in the North. As we saw, white workers for the most part have long objected to working with Negroes, and where this was the case, employers usually adopted the policy of non-employment of Negro laborers. With the coming of the hordes of immigrants from southern and southeastern Europe this policy assumed a more rigid permanency, because from these foreign groups the employers could recruit all the labor they needed, and at the same time that sort of labor to which little or no objection could be made on the ground of race and color. Consequently, the Negro was pushed farther and farther back in industry, his opportunities for obtaining situations in the better paid occupations were considerably lessened, and he was thus forced almost wholly into those lines of work which are very menial, often irregular, and poorly remunerative. Even many of these were invaded by the foreigners to such an extent as to drive the Negroes almost completely out of them. This has been especially true of those occupations in which Negroes exclusively formerly served as cooks, waiters, butlers, footmen, coachmen, barbers, porters, janitors, bootblacks, and the like.¹⁸⁶

When, however, the Great War came and suddenly removed thousands of the aliens from the industries of the North, employers experienced such an urgent need that they were only too glad to draw freely from the Negro population of the South to meet their demands. As the economic interests here were paramount, racial prejudice was apparently swept aside, and Negroes by the thousands were admitted into industries hitherto closed to them. In these they

¹⁸⁶ Warne, F. J., *The Immigrant Invasion*, p. 174.

worked beside white men, and, where they measured up to the efficiency of the latter, they received the same pay. Hence, it is to a great extent the foreign labor element that has been a formidable barrier to the Negro in the industrial field, for it was seen that on its removal from this place Negro labor was employed in its stead, notwithstanding the force of racial antipathy. Though this force is capable of accomplishing much, the probability is that in the face of economic stress it would have been rendered impotent by the action of employers just as it was in the recent emergency, and Negroes would have been hired freely according to the exigencies of industries, if foreigners had not been available in such large numbers.

In view of the fact that Negro laborers have now been given a chance in these industries from which they were formerly barred, and the fact that the American Federation of Labor has consented to admit them into the international unions, and is endeavoring to urge these bodies to carry out this policy, the outlook for Negro labor begins to brighten; for there is a possibility of its becoming a potent factor in industrial affairs: but this outcome is conditioned by three things. These are the volume of post-war immigration from Europe, the extent to which Negroes are actually given effective membership in the unions, and the ability of industrial establishments, operating under normal conditions, to absorb fully the available supply of Negro labor. Already, immigration has attained such a height as to cause grave concern in that it threatens, if left unchecked, to surpass its pre-war records even at a time when an almost unprecedented industrial depression is in existence. So serious is the situation that Congress has passed a bill, which has been approved by the President, and thus will soon become a law, providing for a restriction of the number of immigrants from Europe, for a period of one year, to less than half a million. Judging from the past, one can hardly escape taking the view that, if foreigners should come here in numbers sufficient to meet the demands for

labor as they were doing before the European War, the Negro's position as a laborer will be greatly endangered, for by this supply of alien labor it may again be pushed back to its old pre-war status. On the other hand, on account of racial prejudices, the international unions are still defying the American Federation of Labor by being unwilling to change their constitutions in order to grant the Negroes membership in their unions, and unless the Federation succeeds in coercing these bodies to execute its will, the withholding of this right will stand as another barrier in the way of the Negro workers.

It should be recalled, moreover, that most of the migrants were attracted North to work for great manufacturing concerns which were engaged in turning out supplies to carry on the European War. The ending of this war rendered, on the one hand, many of these establishments unnecessary because they had been erected for emergency purposes, and, on the other, it brought about a great curtailment of production in those plants of a permanent nature. The question now, therefore, is will production in those industries operating under peace conditions, barring industrial crises, be of such a magnitude as to occasion a demand for the full utilization of the very large available supply of Negro labor?

Here, it might not be amiss to give attention to the question as to whether or not the migration has, on the whole, been a success; or, in other words, have the Negroes in general given a good account of themselves in the new environment? A thoroughly satisfactory answer to this question at this point would be impossible, because such an attempt would lead us beyond the intended scope of this essays. A partially satisfactory reply may be had, however, by taking cognizance of the results of the efforts of the migrants in the various occupations in which they were engaged. On the basis of much that has been said concerning the migrants in this regard, one would at once be in serious doubt as to the success of this movement; but this viewpoint would not be altogether correct, because it would be

based on facts which reflect conditions existing at the time when the Negroes had recently arrived North and were struggling to adjust themselves to the new life conditions. Under these circumstances it was almost impossible for them to make a record that could be considered creditable. Despite the hardships which many of the migrants have undergone, and those which numbers of them are undergoing at present because of unemployment, since sufficient time for adjustment has elapsed, the migrants have so wrought in industrial affairs as to furnish ground for reason to believe that the migration has, at least from that standpoint, been a success. This view is firmly taken by a representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. His conclusion in this regard is based on the discoveries of a recent study of the progress of Negro migrants in certain industrial centers in the North and West. These localities are Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cleveland, and the shipbuilding plants on the Atlantic Coast. This investigation showed that the Negroes were rapidly becoming adjusted to the new industrial and social conditions, that they were still being hired as laborers, that they were casting off the habits of tardiness, of indolence and of unreliability, were developing skill and efficiency, and were in every way giving satisfaction to their employers.¹⁸⁷

More recently many employers of large numbers of Negroes were interviewed and the majority of them indicated that they were satisfied with Negro labor. Several steel mill superintendents said that they were agreeably surprised by the results of that sort of labor. The employment manager of a string of large foundries stated that Negro laborers are making good with him and that they can have their jobs as long as the foundries are operating. It was found also that the Pullman shops in Chicago, which hire 15,000 Negroes, were very well satisfied with Negro labor. A superintendent of one of the largest automobile plants

¹⁸⁷ White, W. F., "The Success of Negro Migration," *The Crisis*, 19: 112-15, Jan., 1920.

in Detroit said that he knows that Negroes are good workers, and that he is trying to make his shop one which they will be eager to enter. In this same city an inquiry into the status of the Negroes in various industries showed that 60 per cent of the manufacturers employing Negro workmen were fully satisfied with their labor, 20 per cent were neutral, and 20 per cent expressed themselves as being dissatisfied.¹⁸⁸ A short while past, information from questionnaires sent out by the United States Department of Labor to thirty-eight employers of 6,757 Negro employees showed that the majority of these employers were promoting Negro workmen to the skilled ranks; that they were giving the Negroes the same opportunity as the whites to learn semi-skilled or skilled processes; that they were of the opinion that the Negro workmen show ambition for advancement; that there was no difference in the conduct and behavior of Negro and white workers in the plant; that there was no difference between white and Negro employees in the loss of materials due to defective workmanship; and that the time required to break in employees to the work was the same for Negroes as for whites.¹⁸⁹

Besides, as evidence of their being satisfied with Negro labor, some employers are manifesting personal interest in the affairs of Negro workers by adopting plans of aid and conciliation which tend to encourage laborers and thereby render them more efficient. Accordingly, in a number of plants there exist industrial relations or "mutual interest" departments. The lines of activity of these departments vary from plant to plant. Some establishments merely offer bonus and insurance schemes, emphasize safety, and take steps that lead to the cultivation of cordial group relationship between labor and the management as a substitute for the old cordial individual relationship between the laborer and the boss. Others go beyond this. They see to it that absentee employees are visited, and when

¹⁸⁸ Woofter, T. J., Jr., "The Negro and Industrial Peace," *Survey*, 45: 420, Dec. 18, '20.

¹⁸⁹ *The Negro at Work During The World War and During Reconstruction*, Rep. U. S. Dept. Lab., pp. 50-51.

the latter are ill they have them provided with medical treatment and free nursing. They also supply their workers with better housing, lectures, clubrooms, playgrounds and cheap homes. In this welfare work an Ohio steel mill has gone to the extent of erecting a \$75,000 school building and presenting it to the city for the purpose of educating Negro children. Few employers, moreover, have given Negro labor a voice in determining some of the policies of management through a shop council. Many plants, furthermore, have men of color on the staff of their employment office to see that these various programs adopted by the industrial relations departments be made effective among the Negro workers.¹⁹⁰

Thus the foregoing examples of favorable opinions of employers regarding Negro labor and their acts of good will toward it are indications that the Negro migrants are giving a good account of themselves in the various occupations in which they are engaged. They are signs, too, that Northern employers are beginning to give more recognition to Negro labor and that they are learning that this labor is capable of becoming as profitable as any other labor when it is given a fair chance to demonstrate this. These instances also show that the Negro laborers themselves are awaking to the fact that indolence, irregularity, unreliability, and slothfulness will yield them nothing, and that if they would be successful in the great economic struggle they must make of themselves industrious, prompt, reliable, skilful and alert workers. In short, they are being made to see that they must be efficient. Finally, these favorable expressions and acts of employers in regard to Negro labor point to the fact that the Negroes are gradually approaching their due place in industry, and that they are likely in time to obtain it, provided they do not perpetually encounter effective obstruction by the prejudice of labor unions, by the force of foreign labor and by the failure of peace-time industry to utilize his labor to its fullest extent.

¹⁹⁰ Woolter, T. J., Jr., "The Negro and Industrial Peace," *Survey*, 45: 420, Dec. 18, '20.

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